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THE
W R E A T H
K OF
F R I E N D S H I P;
OR,
A R E T U R N F R O M
I N D I A.
A N O V E L,
I N A S E R I E S O F L E T T E R S.

PRODESSE ET DELECTARE.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L. I.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED BY P. WOGAN, P. BYRNE,
J. PARKER, W. M'KENZIE, J. MOORE,
J. HALPEN, W. JONES, GRUBER
AND M'ALLISTER, AND
D. SERVANT.

M.DCC.XC.

THE
W. R. A. T. H.

FRIDAY

OR

A RETURN FROM

INDIA



IN A SERIES OF

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

DUBLIN

PRINTED BY P. WOGAN, P. BLEN,
PARKER, W. MURPHY, J. MOORE,
J. HALL, W. JONES, GRUBBS
AND MALLISTER, AND
D. BRYANT.

1800

T O

Mrs. MONTAGUE,

WHOSE ELEGANT PEN

AND

POLITE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RENDER HER THE

PATRONESS

OF THE LADIES,

THE FOLLOWING

LETTERS

ARE RESPECTFULLY

INSCRIBED.

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P R E F A C E.

IT may perhaps be thought remarkable, that the Editor of a Novel should be the very person to decry such performances. The World abounds in contradictions, and this is one of them. Yet mistake me not, gentle reader, I would not affright thee at the very entrance of the following work. Neither should any man be misled by names. The generation of novels has sprung up like Hydras, and in general they are equally noxious to Mankind. With a smiling face they often plant a dagger, and convey a subtle poison in a sweet-

a sweetened potion. There have been authors, however, who have endeavoured, under this appearance to reprove and to instruct. They have taken advantage of this mode of publication, to instil useful lessons; and, as it were by accident, to arrest the attention of those who seldom look into a more serious book.

It may be said of modern Novels, as of many of the old Romances, posterity must look into these for a true delineation of the manners of the times. If this be so, how should we blush to see the picture of the present day? Too surely shall we be condemned by our own children, if we can deliver to them no better monuments of our wisdom. The Editor of the following sheets does not pretend to determine what rank they will hold in the estimation of the public, nor give any reason for their appear-

P R E F A C E. vii

appearance. One thing only may be alleged in their defence, and that is a desire to amuse; and if they shall sometimes step a little further, and endeavour to instruct, it is presumed the candid reader will receive them at least with approbation.

T H E

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And now, if I have not been
too tedious, I shall conclude.

THE
AUTHOR'S
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
TO
HIS FRIENDS
AND
PATRONS
IN
GENERAL

THE
W R E A T H
O F
F R I E N D S H I P.

LETTER I.

Mrs. Scudamore to Miss Darnley.

Madras, July 23, 1786.

A SHIP is under sail for England. What joy would be contained in that little sentence, if it were to convey poor Emily to her Eliza!—But alas! no such felicity is in store for your friend! Destined to consume years of splendid misery, Hope has nothing to rest upon but our return again to that dear country where alone we may find tranquillity, and where alone are those who wish to promote it. Yes, my dear Eliza, the dream is at an end; and I

awake to a just sense of those scenes which once danced before my imagination in such gay and alluring colours, and which at that time had power to console me even for a separation from you. But ambition shall no longer control my heart, which once more lays itself at your feet with all its infantine tenderness; divested, perhaps, of some of its *follies*, but full of that *affection* which rolling years have increased, and which your merit and your love so amply demand.

But why do I begin a letter to you in this melancholy strain? Why do I not first tell you that I am in health, that my husband is so too, and that he still loves me!—all which is strictly true. Then why, ungrateful Emily, complain? It is, because she once thought splendor and magnificence would console her for those friends, and that country, she abandoned; that she should return loaded with riches, to the same pleasures, the same society, and the same attachments. Reason and reflection have at last drawn aside the veil spread by avarice and ambition. I perceive that it is possible I may obtain my wish to return to my native land in a
much

much more affluent style than that in which I left it; but with a constitution unable to enjoy what it is in my power to purchase, and a mind that has lost all relish for every thing but the balm of friendship, which no one remains to administer.

Reflections like these occupy the greater part of those hours, which, while our fortunes were moderate were spent in the active exertions of benevolence. To the inhabitants of this sultry clime, indolence is not only an obligation but a necessity, and I begin to fear the lassitude of the body will affect the mind; for I fancy, that my ideas are not so lively as they used to be. My husband laughs at my fears, and persuades me, (or endeavours to do so) that I am quite as agreeable as ever; he says, the women here want life and spirit, and are so uninformed, that I need not be under any apprehensions of losing the character I have already established.

There is one thing that adds greatly to my dislike of this place, the almost impossibility of hearing from my English friends; I have had but one letter from you since I arrived, and surely one letter

ter in *two years*, is a poor recompence for whole months spent in anxiety and expectation. This is the constant complaint here, but it is not the less disagreeable to me that I have partners in my concern. I beg you will never send me any thing but by the company's packet, as letters given to private hands seldom arrive. My letters to you, it seems, have been equally unfortunate. I was weak enough, you may remember, to imagine, that the care I had taken of Diana's education, and the favours I had bestowed on her would have kept her in my service, as I dreaded the very idea of being waited on by strangers; I thought (tho' really a pretty girl) that her attachment to me would have kept her in my service, till at least I had got a little inured to the customs and the natives of this place. She was indeed very attentive to me on the voyage, and her cheerfulness helped to support me under the fatigues of it; but we had no sooner arrived here, than a young man who had seen her land, came to enquire her character, and mentioned his intention of marrying her, should it meet with my approbation. I will confess to you
that

that for a moment I was very selfish, the thoughts of being left entirely to new people were dreadful, and I was half inclined to insist on her services; but affection got the better of self, and I said all for her that I really knew she deserved. The young man immediately made his proposals which were accepted. She attempted to say something in her defence; and as I saw the joy that had taken possession of her heart, I was determined to throw no damp upon it. I forgave every thing but my own folly, in disbelieving what my friends told me would be the consequence. She now visits me in a most superb palanquin, and is on an equality with most people here.

This reminds me, that I have never once told you the history of poor Eleanor Gaylove, whom I think you took notice of, when you left me on board the Indiaman. Her father, who lives at St. Helena, had sent her over to England under the care of general M——, to be educated; and she was to return with him when he should be again ordered to India, which it was more than probable would be the case in a few years. This, as was expected, took place

place the very year of our departure ; her cloaths were all packed up with Mrs. M——s, in whose suite she was to go ; and as they expected to sail at a short warning she had left school, and was in the house with Mrs. M——.

It happened that their dispositions were entirely opposite to each other, and the consequence was a very high disagreement between the ladies. The general espoused his wife's cause, and shewed Eleanor letters he had written to her father, with an account of her behaviour, which he resolved to send in the first ship that should sail. She had every reason to fear he would take this step, but was sanguine enough to think his humanity would prevent so cruel a procedure. The general did not fail in the ship first mentioned, but eager to get quit of his charge, he put her on board the Minerva, with only half her wardrobe, the rest of her apparel being packed up with Mrs. M's, who would not be at the trouble to separate them. This however seemed no obstacle to our lively friend, she came amongst us as gay as a lark ; exulting in the idea of seeing her parents, and that little country where all her hopes were centered ;

it

it contained, in the word *home*, every thing in her idea that the heart could wish for.

Every one was delighted with the little lively passenger, whose spirits, I believe, contributed to keep her in health; and she nursed, rallied, and consoled every one. It was impossible not to be fond of so artless a creature; and we both grieved and rejoiced at sight of that island where she was to be left. We rejoiced on her account, and mourned for our own loss. On our anchoring, Mr. Scudamore waited on the governor, and also on Mr. Gaylove, to inform him of his daughter's arrival, lest her immediate appearance, when not expected, might have some bad effect; but what was his astonishment, to find that those letters which general M—— had threatened to send, had really arrived! That her father was inexorable, and would not allow her to land, but abandoned her to the winds and the waves,—more merciful than himself.

We had some difficulty on Mr. Scudamore's return to the ship, to know in what manner to inform the poor girl of this cruel determination; and when told,

told, what was to be done in consequence of it. A general council of women was called, who were all unanimous in offering every assistance in their power; a wardrobe was formed out of the stock which each of us possessed, and it was determined to take her to India, and endeavour to make the best of her desperate situation. I thought, poor girl! she must have died at being thus deserted; but her happy disposition got the better of the shock, and in a few weeks after she had left the island, she became calm and composed. On hearing we had determined to carry her to India, and take care of her, I thought gratitude would have had the same sorrowful effect which we expected from misfortune. She possesses one of those dispositions that kindness may lead to any thing; but harsh treatment hardens and renders obdurate what is naturally a very noble heart.

At Madras she became my guest, and remained so for some months, till a gentleman of large property, an acquaintance of Mr. Scudamore's, who lived at Cudalore, came about some business; he was frequently with us, was soon charmed with our ward, and
offered

offered her his hand, and a fortune almost completed. She told him how sensible she was of his kindness, and hoped the esteem she had then for him would in time grow to affection, as she had no other prepossession ;—if he was satisfied with this confession she was entirely his. They were married, and left Madras soon after, and she now writes to me that she is the happiest of mortals.

General M—— has set every thing to rights with her parents, his resentment having subsided before he reached St. Helena ; and they have written to her most kindly, accusing themselves in the severest terms of their cruelty, and wishing only for the happiness of blessing her before they die. Her husband talks of quitting India in a short time, and returning to spend the remainder of his days in England. I will write by her, and introduce her to your acquaintance, as I think her extremely amiable. Mr. Scudamore comes to tell me I must cease scribbling, as the packet must be made up to-day. Adieu, my dearest, best friend ; think of me often, and believe me ever yours,

Emily Scudamore.

Mr.

Mr. Scudamore in continuation.

I HAVE been quarrelling with Emily, because she will not permit me to read her letter to you. I have therefore told her plainly, that she may be jealous if she chuses, but I am determined to write to you myself, if it is only for the pleasure of abusing her, which I certainly shall do very heartily; and you will allow I am sure, that she deserves no favour, who dares to write letters a husband may not see. I know she sighs after England, tho' she would not have me know it; but I will tell *you*, that her sighs shall not last long, for I will return as soon as my affairs are settled; as that is uncertain, I would not mention a time to her which perhaps I might not be able to keep.

But I forget that I was going to abuse her. You will find how little reason I have to indulge her, when I say, that in spite of the luxuries of this place she remains temperate,—in spite of lovers, she is chaste,—and in spite of
the

the climate she is beautiful. She does not game, tho' nothing is so fashionable,—she does not talk scandal, tho' there is no other conversation in the circle which she frequents;—and to sum up all her crimes and misdemeanors, she reads sermons to her dependents!—Did you ever hear of so unaccountable a woman? or one so unfit for this place?

Farewell, Eliza. I trust I shall bring your friend to you in a short time, with as many virtues as she had when you parted; and with as much love for you as you can possibly expect from one who (I believe) doats upon

Your humble Servant,

Lionel Scudamore.

L E T.

LETTER II.

Miss Darnley to Mrs. Scudamore.

Wansford-House, January 3, 1787.

YOUR letter, my dearest Emily, was the most welcome messenger of Friendship. To hear you are well must at all times give me pleasure, but particularly so after a silence which had given me great uneasiness. Let not unnecessary fear, my friend, embitter those comforts you at present possess; my affection for you is always the same, and whether you hear from me or not, my sentiments can never alter. If it were not improper to shew any signs of discontent, I, too, would blame fortune for our separation; the bonds, however, of amity reach far beyond the distance at which we are now placed; love and kindness are not confined within the narrow circle of a Kingdom; they shine alike in every clime, and every

every good heart alike feels their influence. Affection, as the bright luminary of the day, gilds the dawning of the morn, and adds fresh lustre to the evening shade. As our friendship was formed in that early period of life when the mind is most susceptible of every tender sentiment, and has thro' succeeding years increased in vigour, I doubt not but at the close of life we shall have the heartfelt satisfaction of reflecting, that we have been mutual supports to each other; and shall have proved female friendship, not merely a *chimera*, but a blessing bestowed by heaven on favoured mortals to make this rugged life delightful.

You will expect I should give you some account of what is passing amongst your friends; but the truth is, I live so retired, that, except in my own circle, I am almost as little acquainted with the gay world as you are. With respect to myself, I spend my time in pursuing the plan I formerly marked out. Our neighbourhood has suffered most severely in the death of our amiable and worthy rector, Dr. Morton; to regret the loss of so good a man would be selfish, yet you can scarce imagine how
much

much I want him; his advice was my guide, and his opinion, the test by which I proved all my actions; if he applauded, I could not have a doubt of doing right. His soul was as much superior to flattery, as his firm mind was above being bias'd by any accident. His amiable wife still continues in the village; and as the living is not yet disposed of, she has not quitted the house.

My favourite, Fanny West, is very well married to a young farmer, who lives upon one of my estates, so that I still enjoy her society. Her husband is a well informed, sensible man, and I flatter myself I shall at last have the pleasure of seeing a *happy* matrimonial connexion. Don't mistake me, Emily, I mean not to cast a censure upon *you*, or my other married friends; but you are all at too great a distance for me to judge of your happiness. Tell Mr. Scudamore I am particularly obliged to him for his letter; he could not have found a subject more to my taste than that he fixed upon. Your story of Eleanor I thank you for, and well remember how much I was pleased with her on board the Indiaman. It appears,

pears, Emily, very extraordinary, how any parents who were not altogether void of feeling, could at such a time, and so situated, forsake their child, tho' her conduct had been ever so imprudent. Where was that natural affection, which we suppose seated by instinct in the heart? Had she been an outcast of fortune, sent to plead for charity, how inhuman should we have thought them to have refused their protection!—But a child!—a helpless girl! who had no other friends but themselves, and who, as their daughter, had never offended,—what excuse can they plead? Well may they wish to see her, and beg her forgiveness! In the sight of heaven their crime is very great.

But whither am I rambling? I have been so shocked, that any creature, who has received so much from a merciful creator, should act in such a direct contradiction to all his laws, that I cannot write with patience on the subject.

I am so far from wondering at Diana's conduct, that I was all along convinced, that her chief motive for going along with you, was the prospect of preferment. If she is happy, I am sure
you

you will feel satisfied that you did not prevent her inclination from taking its full scope, but allowed her to shine an *Indian Princess*.

I look forward with great pleasure to the time when I shall once more see my Emily ; I flatter myself, it will not now be long. Support that time, which you are obliged to remain, with a firmness becoming your good understanding ; and remember, whilst you are indulging a fretful discontent, you are destroying the peace of a man you have vowed to love and honour, and who seems worthy of your tenderness. I have sent you all the newspapers and magazines for the last year ; perhaps they may for a moment amuse, and make you forget you are so far from one who loves you with an undissembled affection, and who can with truth subscribe herself,

Your faithful friend,

Eliza Darnley.

L E T.

LETTER III.

Miss Darnley to Lady Julia Harcourt.

Wansford-House, February 28.

YOUR letter, my Julia, gave me infinite pleasure; but yet it was attended with some sensations not so perfectly agreeable. I felt ashamed to receive a letter from you, before I had once acknowledged those obligations I had so lately experienced from your amiable family. My warmest thanks are due to my dear Lady St. Clair, for her attention; her many qualifications have made an impression on my mind that time cannot efface, and my highest ambition is to follow her steps, tho' at an humble distance. Virtue cannot but be admired in every situation, but it must be particularly pleasing, when placed upon an eminence where so many are apt to turn giddy with their height.—Your mother unites in her per-

son those *lesser virtues*, as the world are pleased to call them, which are yet difficult to attain, with qualifications of a more important nature. That winning grace with which she acquits herself on the most trifling occasion, attended with true piety, has made her, in my opinion, a model, to follow which would be the surest road to perfection. How happy are you, my amiable friend, in such a parent? How many tears has the sight of Lady St. Clair cost me? I, too, Julia, had a parent, blessed with heaven's best gifts; but, alas! I was deprived of her at a time when her advice was particularly necessary. It was the will of heaven in one year to deprive me of both my amiable and ever to be lamented parents. That I may be forgiven for the many hours I have spent in fruitless tears, and I doubt sinful regrets, is my earnest prayer.

You will tell me, Julia, I am grave; can you wonder at my being so, left in this wide world without one near connexion, a solitary being? and tho' fortune has been liberal in her favours to me, I find many hours which might have been agreeably employed in pleasant scenes of domestic intercourse. I am particularly

particularly happy, my Julia, in your friendship; in you I centre all my love; and whilst we continue in this world, I am sure our firm band of amity will never be broken.

You have often expressed a surprize, and particularly in your last letter, that I should remain so long in a state of celibacy. As I find myself this morning in a serious humour, I am determined to resolve all your doubts. From my earliest infancy, you may remember, I have been taught to reason and reflect. My excellent parents gave this bias to my mind, which, in the subsequent years of my life, I have found productive of the greatest happiness. However, of this I may be certain, that if reason and reflection have not always produced as much positive happiness as I expected, they have, at least, preserved me from many scenes of wretchedness, which I might otherwise have encountered.

Upon looking through the world, and observing the married life with no incurious eye, I perceived (or thought I perceived) a want of that happiness which unmarried lovers generally expect. That connexion which has for its

end every thing that is amiable and friendly to human nature; that connexion which was formed for the wisest and best purposes, is, from the perverse humours of mankind, frequently rendered a heavy yoke; a burthen difficult to be borne. This observation, my friend, does not imply a censure upon the state *itself*, but upon the perversion of so sacred an ordinance, Sincerely I can say with Milton,

Hail wedded love, mysterious law! by thee,

Founded on reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known:

Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets!

After making this honourable mention of matrimony, I may be allowed to condemn those who turn this house of love, and mansion of peace, into a den of wild animals. Indeed, too frequently have I seen those, who in every respect had it in their power to make each other happy, labour with no common pains to procure mutual misery. I do not absolutely say that they study the art of tormenting; yet so little do they

they endeavour to give pleasure to each other, so seldom do they think it necessary, either to *bear* or *forbear*, that they drag through the remainder of their lives a miserable existence. I say nothing of the children of such unhappy marriages. Formed upon the model of their parents, they step forth into life with the same passions and prejudices; and in their turn act the same wretched part their parents did before them.

To engage, then, in a matrimonial connexion, is a matter of much greater importance than the world generally imagines. If two persons were to be shut up together in a box, and fight till they were tired, then sleep and fight again, there would be nothing in it; but when this contentious humour is to be handed down from generation to generation, when children's children are to be the unhappy sufferers, better is it to remain not only *almost*, but *altogether* *such as I am*.

And now, my lively friend, I think I hear you say I reason too deeply. Perhaps that may be the case; but as I must be the best judge of my own happiness, I shall not attempt to make any apology for the peculiarity of my sentiments.

ments. After this I doubt not but you will imagine that I am determined to remain in a state of *old-maid-ism*; but perhaps you may be mistaken. To many, a state of celibacy abounds with comforts, comforts which are not at all times to be exchanged for the precarious happiness of a married state; yet when that happiness *does* arrive, when love and confidence meet under the same roof, adieu every thought of solitary life. Welcome those tender *charities*, that Milton speaks of, which are productive of the highest state of happiness our beings are capable of enjoying in this life; which supports us on our way through those perplexed paths which must be passed by the happiest of mankind; and open a future prospect, where the deficiencies of this lower world will be effectually made up by uninterrupted love and perpetual delight.

I will not apologize to you, my friend, for the serious manner in which I have answered your letter; and only beg, that through every changing scene of existence, I may find you the same. Make my best love to your dear father and mother, and tell them, my grateful
heart

heart will remember their kindness to me whilst it has any sensation.

Adieu, my Julia, yours,

Eliza Darnley.



LETTER IV.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Lewingslon Abbey, March 1.

I HAVE just perused my dear Eliza's letter, *full-fraught* with *old-maid-ism*, and cannot say I am at all delighted with the sentiments *therein* delivered. You say, "you have looked at the world with no incurious eye;" so have numbers, without understanding it. Pardon me, I don't mean this as any reflection on your own judgment, on the
C 4 contrary;—

contrary ;—but I will not pay any compliments that may look like flattery. The world, you may perhaps have *heard*, is large; and when you have said that of it, you have affirmed what is only certain about it. You may be told, indeed, it is wise, it is knowing, it is learned ; or that it is a false world, a base degenerate world, a world of wickedness; or that it is a strange world, a whimsical world, a censorious world; this, I say, you may be told, and no one perhaps tell an untruth about it. Only remember this, that whatever fault or failing any persons condemn in the world, they themselves are almost sure to be particularly guilty of it. Thus you cannot blame me for so often traversing this Earth, drawing in every day of my life so many *pints* of air, consuming so much bread and water, without having made one observation on the world. But seriously, my dear friend, if you have been so close an observer of the matrimonial state, it should have been with a view to reform it, and not to shrink from it; and depend upon it, example is beyond every thing in that case.

I cannot

I cannot agree with you that it is not so happy a state as unmarried people in general believe. I think it by far the most probable way to enjoy earthly happiness, to enter into the connubial life, where two people are joined by mutual affection founded on esteem, with a full intention to exert all their powers of pleasing to render each other blessed,

“ Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,

“ With boundless confidence! for naught but love

“ Can answer love, and render bliss secure.”

When we find the case otherwise, believe me it is no fault of the married state; but owing to the improper manner in which people generally form their connexions. When we see interest the chief motive of their union, and the parties themselves meet with the utmost indifference, is it to be wondered that aversion and disgust should be the consequence, and that it should end in a miserable separation?

I think our English ladies ought, of all others, to set the example of happiness in a married life. The peculiar ad-

vantages we enjoy in our laws and constitution, seem to point them out as proper objects to shine in the domestic circle. Let me for a moment transport you into Holland, where the beautiful female blots her fingers in the counting-house, and bears the whole load of mercantile drudgery; can it be expected that she will shine in the softer scenes of life?—Or, let me convey to your imagination our more polite neighbours, the *Madames of France*, or the *Signoras of Italy*.—The females of these countries are too little subject to the laws of restriction, to make a figure in private life.

If too great confinement be the fault of Spain, the inhabitants of either side of the Alps seem to have fallen into the opposite extreme; tho' liberty and freedom of will be desirable, yet too great a licentiousness of manners is an error ever to be avoided. The liberty of France, and the dissoluteness of the Italians, are extremes in conduct equally unfavourable to happiness in the married life.—England, however, may boast greater things; tho' I am afraid in some degree there is reason to think we have been too near neighbours to
the

the French. The genuine English ladies (I mean those whose manners and morals have never been corrupted by crossing the Channel between Dover and Calais) possess the happy medium in vain to be met with in other nations. Here, we see beauty, not shut up in convents; here we behold virtue and symmetry reflect each other. The females of England are too discreet to need restraint; and in general have enough of liveliness not to be depressed with every misfortune. The gaiety of their hearts, which is the effect of virtue and innocence, enlivens the thorny path of life, smooths the rugged bed of care, and teaches their admiring country-men, that to be cheerful and happy, is to be good. Are these fair nymphs devoted to the sacred bands of wedlock? We behold the lovely wife soothing the husband's pain; we see the charming mother smiling upon her beauteous offspring; whilst the enamoured swain completes the pleasing group, with *looks of cordial love*, hanging over his thrice happy family.—These are the daughters of Britain!

But let me not be partial; let me sub-join one word in behalf of manly virtue;

tue; where those who rule have discretion, those who obey will have no reason to complain of oppression: 'tis the coward who is cruel, the brave are ever open and generous. The sons of old England have always been the sons of true courage; and if our daughters have grown up under our hands like a flourishing and beautiful shrub, our hardy sons have lifted up their heads to heaven, like a towering and magnificent oak, which by its strength protects, and by its spreading branches shelters the tender shrub from every danger of the inclement sky.

I think it is now high time that I should put a stop to my disquisition upon the subject; and if my arguments in favour of matrimony have not persuaded you to become one of that honourable fraternity, at least I hope, if ever again you hear me charged with levity or want of thought, you will do me the justice to acknowledge that I *have* made observations on the world, and all things in it.—And that they have induced me, when a proper opportunity shall offer, to add one more to the number of *happy* couples.

Witness my Hand,

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

LETTER V.

Mrs. Scudamore, to Miss Darnley.

Madras, October 6, 1786.

THE seamen who navigate the ships that convey my letters to you, are much obliged to our friendship; for I continually offer prayers for their preservation, for fair winds, smooth seas, and quick passages. I have every reason to believe, and hope that my wishes are propitious, as I hear of many of them arriving safe, and still you receive very few of my remembrances. Who shall I accuse then of this cruel neglect? Not the winds or the waves, for they are very gallant; and were I a heathen, and offered sacrifices to Amphitrite, I could not possibly expect more attention than I receive. I must complain then of those selfish men of business, who think of nothing but gain, and look on letters as mere matters of form
and

and no better than waste paper; and never consider the anxieties and expectations, and those heart-achs which the loss of them occasion. But do not imagine I have vanity enough to think my prayers are of so much avail; for if I do but call to mind the love and affection every ship is freighted with, I cannot wonder they are in general so fortunate.

I have received one packet from you since I wrote last, full of kindness and entertainment; it has transported me to England, and I am at this moment sitting with you in your dressing-room talking (in idea) over every subject from which we extracted pleasure in our younger days. I attend you to your green-house, your poultry yard, your shady walks, and the banks of that charming rivulet which washes those hanging meadows, and winds so sweetly thro' your large domain.—Here everything is vast and magnificent! We can shew you the Ganges or the Indus; but are strangers to that little rippling current, which so often beautifies the British landscape, and, as Dr. Byron says,

“ Would dance in soft murmurs the pebbles among.”

At

At another time, in a mild tranquil evening we walk to your village, where you dispense health and happiness, and receive the blessings and thanks of all your dependants.—How happy, compared to the generality of the peasants, are those so depending; and how real and how permanent is your happiness drawn from so pure a source! How preferable to the princely bondage we suffer here!—where we cannot move without a train of poor wretches who tremble at a nod; and think a smile a blessing of too high a value to be enjoyed by persons whose lot is servitude.—Poor creatures! I thank heaven, our domestics have no severity to accuse us of; and I hope they are at least as happy as we can make them in their present situation.

I must confess to you a great weakness, that I am yet hardly reconciled to their complexion: but I endeavour to reason myself out of so absurd a prejudice, by considering, that if they had been born subjects of Britain, it is possible they might have possessed fairer skins; and, on the contrary, had I been a native of Indostan, I might at this moment have been wetting the
blinds

blinds of some capricious beauty, who would censure or commend my officiousness, as her humour directed; and perhaps reward me with a blow for my assiduity, if she had no need for the service I was engaged in.

You, who are all benevolence and charity, can have no idea how your country-women treat these poor creatures; who suffer their tyranny for the sake of present support, and bend beneath the yoke, in general, with cheerfulness, and show a faithfulness and honesty which perhaps sometimes are not to be found in the breasts of their masters.—But you, who were always an enemy to scandal, will say, I grow censorious, and that, disliking the country, I cavil at every one in it; that I am indulging a habit of mind, always of rapid growth, which will unfit me both for my present situation, and when I return to that dear speck of the globe—the goal of all my hopes and wishes.

Scudamore has told me, that perhaps in another twelvemonth his affairs will be so far settled as to allow us to leave India. How kind he is to give me this intelligence, and how grateful I feel for this proof of his affection!—If husbands did

did but know how much they gain by giving to a wife (whose interest and happiness is inseparable from their own) their confidence, surely they would never withhold so easy a method of conferring happiness.

You ask my opinion of the world on this side the water; whether it abounds with those vices, those follies, and those crimes, which so debase and spoil the one I have felt?—Exactly the same, my dear Eliza! nor will you doubt it, when you consider who are the persons that form this society.—That they are men, wanting fortunes, and taking various methods to procure them; married to women chiefly adventurers, as mercenary as themselves; some, perhaps, with liberal educations, and some without any. But comparing the smallness of this place to your vast metropolis, I believe upon the whole we are quite as good; and could I cease to pine after those friends from whom I am separated, and endeavour to look on the bright side of the picture, I should often meet, not only with entertainment, but, what a less serious mind than my own would call, pleasure.

The

The ladies here have no care about their houses or their families,—I mean, they abound in so much plenty, that the wants of a family never prey upon the spirits; and fine cloaths, fine equipages, and fine houses, help to keep up that gaiety which takes possession of hearts at ease; neither filled with deep knowledge, or deep thought, and which are not much troubled with sensibility. This makes the women lively companions, and the men, by associating so much with *us*, become attentive and polite.

We have concerts in a very good style, (in which *I* sometimes take a part) and dramatic performances by gentlemen and ladies above mediocrity; but of these I can be nothing more than a spectator, not having confidence enough in my own abilities to venture to appear in so public a situation. My husband has attempted tragedy, and I believe, would he attend to the art, and give up some time to it, he would probably succeed; but he says it is not his profession, and he leaves it to those who have more time to throw away, and minds more inclined to light amusements.

Farewell,

Farewell, Eliza! my next will be conveyed to you by Mrs. Dennison, my lively Eleanor.—Do not forget to make my remembrances to all my favourites, and to those who have not yet forgot your

Emily Scudamore.

L E T.

LETTER VI.

Miss Courtney, to Lady Julia Harcourt.

March 9.

OPPRESSED and bending beneath a load of grief, that at present almost deprives me of sensation, to whom shall I unbosom myself, but to you, my sympathizing Julia?

Mrs. Gibson, our dear Mrs. Gibson, is no more! How will that sentence wound your feeling heart! The friend of our early years,—she who pointed out to us the paths of virtue, is snatched away by the cold hand of death!—My agonies at this time are not to be described. She was seized with a violent fever, which in a few days put a period to her valuable life; she had scarce any lucid intervals from the beginning of her disorder, till within a few moments of her death.

As I was standing weeping over her, she looked a little more composed, and snatching

snatching my hand with the little remaining strength she had left, pressed it to her lips, exclaiming, "My child! my Selina! who shall comfort thee?" and soon after expired. You may judge of my situation; I fell senseless on the floor, and for several hours all efforts to restore me were ineffectual. But it was the will of heaven that I should not remain in that enviable state; I awoke once more, fully sensible of all the horrors of my situation.—Forlorn! disconsolate! wretched!

Soon after this event some distant relations of my dear departed benefactress came to take possession of her house and effects. But how unlike herself! One of them observing me almost stupified with grief, told me very plainly, that as he saw the scenes around me only served to heighten my distress, I had been packing up and preparing for my departure. How his words pierced my soul! Whither shall I go, thought I, left alone, a miserable being in this wide world;—to whom shall I apply for relief? Early neglected by my parents, from whom alone I had a claim for protection; now deprived by the stroke of heaven, of a friend who had been
more

more than a parent to me,—What will become of me!

Oh! my friend, how cutting is the reflection that my own relations never enquire after me!—But let me not rashly blame them, perhaps they have been, like myself, children of misfortune; and are now struggling with all the hardships of adversity. Or, perhaps, fate has long since put a period to their existence; and I, wretched outcast! am the only remaining branch of my miserable family.

But do not, my dear Julia, do not be too much distressed for me; I have fortitude, and I trust, on this trying occasion, I can exert it. Reason and reflection will do much for me. Heaven, for its own wise purposes, had thought fit to afflict me; but I have this heart-felt satisfaction, that there will never be laid upon the children of affliction, burthens heavier than they are able to bear.

To your dear mother I now apply, as the only surviving friend I have, for counsel and advice. I know her goodness will prompt her to point out to me the best method for my future plan of life. I think if any old lady wanted a
companion

companion to read to her, that spent a very retired life, it would be the most eligible to my present turn of mind; for indeed, my dear friend, I am ill calculated for the bustle of a public life.—But whatever your mother thinks best for me, that I will, with all the cheerfulness in my power, pursue. I make no apology to you, my beloved friend, for thus pouring out before you the sorrows of your

Selina Courtney.

L E T-

LETTER VII.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Levingston-Abbey, March 10.

I HAVE just received a letter from my friend Selina Courtney, which has rendered me unfit for any society but yours, my Eliza; to you, I can, with unrestrained confidence lay open every feeling of my heart. She informs me of the death of our worthy Mrs. Gibson; a circumstance, which would at any time have given me pain, but the peculiarity of my poor friend's situation, must make it so truly distressing to her, that I am afraid her spirits, naturally weak, will be hardly able to sustain the shock.

You have often, I am sure, heard me praise her for personal graces and mental accomplishments; she certainly possesses both in a much more eminent degree than is in general the lot of human beings;

beings ; and joins with them, a disposition so sweet, so engaging, that it is impossible to know her, and not love her. She was, when very young, brought to Mrs. Gibson's school to be educated, by a middle-aged, decent-looking woman, whom Selina at that time called the house-keeper ; but has now no recollection of, neither can she remember the place she came from, or give any account of her family or friends. The cloaths she brought with her were expensive ; and seemed to denote profuseness in those who had procured them for her. A large allowance was sent regularly every quarter by an unknown hand ; but after this woman left her, no one came to see her.

One day as Mrs. Gibson was looking amongst her cloaths, she perceived a small box ; it contained a jewel of great value, wrapped up in a piece of white paper, in which these words were written in a female hand,—“ This jewel must be constantly worn by Selina, as a token of remembrance from a dear friend, now for ever lost to her.”

On my first going to the school, the strictest friendship commenced between us :

“We have still slept together;
 “Rose at an instant; learned, play’d,
 “eat, together;
 “And wheresoe’er we went, like
 “Juno’s swans,
 “Still we went coupled and inse-
 “parable.”

I now flatter myself this friendship
 will end but with our existence.

About three years ago the remittances
 which had been before so regularly sent,
 entirely ceased. Mrs. Gibson carefully
 concealed this circumstance from the
 rest of the school. Soon after this, on
 account of her increasing age and infir-
 mities, she declined that fatiguing way
 of life; and took a small house in a vil-
 lage about twenty miles from hence.
 Thither she retired, with Miss Court-
 ney for her companion, and they have
 lived together since that time perfectly
 happy and contented.—Judge then,
 how much the loss of this good woman
 will afflict my dear friend!

As soon as I had read her letter, and
 a little recovered myself, I carried it to
 my mother. Ever awake to the im-
 pulses of sensibility, which in her arise
 not only from a delicacy of feeling, but
 from the more solid motives of religion;
 she

she readily joined with me in dropping a tear to the memory of an old friend. "I rejoice, my Julia," said she, "that you will now have an opportunity of convincing Selina of the sincerity of your friendship; and have now an asylum to offer her. I will go with you myself to-morrow, to bring her here, and we will join our efforts to alleviate those distresses which at this time she cannot but feel."—

Oh! my Eliza! how thankful ought I to be to Heaven for blessing me with parents so indulgent to all my wishes!—May my heart be ever grateful to them for the daily proofs they give me of affection; and may I, by a return of kind attentions, smooth their passage through the vale of life. I have indulged in a recapitulation of past scenes, till every eye but mine is closed in balmy sleep.

How still and solemn is this midnight scene! Good night, my Eliza. That your guardian angel may hover round your pillow, and protect you from every stroke of adverse fortune,

Prays, your

Julia Harcourt.

Lady Julia Harcourt in continuation.

I deferred sending you this letter till I could give you the pleasing intelligence of Selina's being safely lodged under this hospitable roof.

My mother and myself went early yesterday morning for her: We found her in very low spirits, and much affected at the sight of us; but my mother's repeated assurances of friendship and protection, seemed rather to revive her. I hope a little time spent amongst friends that love her so much will entirely restore her. She is more lovely, more beautiful than ever. I am very desirous that you should see her, as I am sure you will admire her. Her liberal education has had the best effect; and she seems to have made the greatest use of those excellent instructions which have been given her by her good tutoresses. Tho' beautiful in a very high degree, she has not the least tincture of affectation; her general behaviour is not so much to attract the admiration of others, as to con-
fer

fer happiness on all around her. You will readily believe what a sincere satisfaction it is to me to have this friend constantly with me; to partake of all my amusements and entertainments. To us who reside so constantly in the country, she will indeed be a valuable acquisition.

My father received her with all the affection of a parent; called her his second Julia, and said she might assure herself, that as long as he lived, she should never be in want of a comfortable home; and in return he would make one request to her, that she would for the future endeavour to be cheerful and happy.—Selina dropped a tear of gratitude, but at that moment could not speak.

I am summoned down stairs; our old neighbour, Lord Mordington, is come to dine with us, a blessing we do not often enjoy; and if he feels himself as choleric as he did the last time he was here, I am of opinion he would be better at home. He is expecting his son from his travels every day; if he resembles his father in his disposition, I pray heaven to keep him far from the presence of your

Julia Harcourt.

D 3

L E T.

LETTER VIII.

Rev. *Edward Seymour*, to *Henry Drummond, Esq.*

March 28.

I THANK you, my dear friend, for your congratulations. They found me at Wansford, about an hour after I had taken possession of my living, which, I believe, will prove full five hundred a year.

When I came to Wansford, I found the late Rector's lady still in the house; and, as I hate to wound a feeling mind, and the tears produced by affliction are more than I can bear, I hesitated some time, in what manner I should proceed, so as to give poor Mrs. Morton notice of my arrival, without at the same time reminding her of the loss she had sustained. I found, however, that report had been busy ever since my arrival, in conveying the news from house to house,

house, till it had arrived at that which I was so afraid of distressing.

Whilst I sat at tea I received a message from the lady, desiring to see me. I went immediately, and I think I shall be the better for the visit as long as I live. Mrs. Morton's unfeigned sorrow, mixed with such a cheerful resignation, has impressed itself so deeply on my mind, that I shall ever respect her character; and only wish, that in my ministry, I may follow the steps of that holy man she now laments. His death is universally regretted. He might justly be called the father of the afflicted! To be in want, or sorrow, were sufficient recommendations to him. You will easily believe how much I have been delighted with this account of him. You have often rallied me on my serious turn of mind. I have studied human nature with some degree of attention, and have had too often reason to regret the depraved state it is now in; you will allow me, therefore, to rejoice I have found one man, whose memory alone is sufficient to raise the most delightful emotions.

Tho' your temper and disposition are both of a lively nature, yet I know you

will pardon me for these serious reflections. I will not however trespass upon you, but proceed on my story. After having taken possession, I supped with Mrs. Morton, and the Curate, whom she had obligingly invited. Mrs. Morton told me that there was a house ready prepared for her in the village, to which she could remove the very next day. I begged her to continue where she was as much longer as was agreeable or convenient to herself; and to make her perfectly easy, agreed to lodge with Mr. Watson, (the curate) who seems a modest well-behaved man, and has a wife and family. At this place of residence I now am, and think I shall remain some time, as the life of a solitary bachelor is to me the most uncomfortable state in the world. Watson is a very agreeable companion, and his wife well-informed; his children too young to be troublesome, and old enough to be very entertaining; therefore, my friend, you must come and see me where I now am. I shall not feel myself satisfied till you arrive; your friendship has been the cordial that has given a relish to every scene, and has smoothed those hours when
 every

every other amusement seemed to fail. I shall expect you soon, for as your friendship *has* been the comfort of all my past years, it must make a large part of what is to come, or the change will not be for the better.

I have been busy, preparing for Sunday; you know my fears are not few, lest I should labour in the Vineyard in vain. However, I will do my best; and what I am deficient in eloquence, I will endeavour to make up by example. I am pleased that fortune has placed me in a *village*, as here I shall have it in my power to be of more real use, than in a more extensive situation. Had I laboured ever so hard to reform the world, my labour would have been but vanity and folly; but in a small circle, a taper will send forth an agreeable ray of light: It is the sun alone that can shed its benign influence on the whole globe.

I have seen few of my neighbours yet. The situation is delightful; and as the country had always more charms for me than a life of folly and noise, you will not wonder that I sign myself your contented friend,

Edward Seymour.

D 5

L E T.

LETTER IX.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Lewington Abbey, April 2.

YOU are so lazy, my dear Eliza, that I am obliged to continue writing without waiting for your answers; or I verily believe all intercourse would cease between us. Could I hear that you were on the point of marriage, and busily employed in preparing bridal finery, I would try to forgive you; but still to persist in old maid-ism, and live entirely by yourself, without even writing to your friends, is an insult not to be borne. That love should be the first subject of my pen this day, you must not wonder, for, *love, almighty love!* is to be the only thing particularly considered in this sheet of paper. And that there can be no love without a lover, is very plain; therefore to him must I direct your attention. But I will not hurry you too precipitately into the gentleman's

tleman's acquaintance, you must be introduced in proper form.

The fineness of the weather yesterday afternoon, tempted Selina and myself to stroll into the garden. On our return we were informed that, Sir Robert Midford was in the drawing-room, a gentleman who has lately bought an estate in this neighbourhood; and having some time ago a slight acquaintance with my father, had availed himself of that circumstance, that he might enjoy a little society for the short time he was to stay in this part of the country.—We immediately, like all *young* ladies, began to flatter ourselves he might be an agreeable man; and as beaux are not very common here, thought it would be the most rational plan to join the company.

But how shall I give you an idea of the hero, that our imaginations had formed so brilliant? he is very tall, and so thin, that without you have seen the starved apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*, you cannot imagine such a skeleton.—His complexion is a bright beautiful olive, which, contrasted with the white powder in his nice peruke, has a striking effect. The whole cast of his countenance,

tenance, I have not the least doubt, is set at the glass every morning before he *emerges*; and the most extraordinary occasion in the world, would not tempt him to alter one muscle.—His conversation is as formal as his person; and therefore Selina and I remained busily employed in making flowers, without attending to what was going forward. But this, as you shall hear in the sequel, turned to our advantage.

When he took his leave, my father very politely set him to the hall, where he turned round, and with the utmost precision addressed him, “My Lord St. Clair, I have for some time been making accurate observations on the female part of the creation, with a view to my future establishment in life; my attention has hitherto been fruitless, as I never have met with a woman I thought worthy to become the partner of my joys.—This afternoon I have observed something in your daughter, which leads me to think she is the *kind* of companion I wish for; she has happily blended the polish of a polite education, with the steadiness of a country life; and if I can be so fortunate as to gain

gain your approbation, I have not the least doubt of making myself acceptable to the young lady.

My father enjoys a joke against *poor me* too well, to let this go past him; he therefore begged by all means he would speak to me himself, as it was his determination never to bias my mind in the least degree; and requested he would breakfast with us the next morning, when he would undertake to give him an opportunity to make his own address.

You may suppose what a very agreeable evening I had, in expectation of so formidable a siege. This morning about ten the beau arrived. Breakfast is at best but a formal meal, but this was worse than common; my father all the while enjoying himself so much, I was afraid he would have scalded himself more than once with his chocolate.—

As soon as possible he led out my mother, giving Selina a nod to follow them; but that I absolutely prevented by seizing so fast hold of her hand, that without she had made a riot, she had no chance of escaping. The worthy Baronet however was determined that should

not

not prevent his intention, for he instantly moved to a vacant seat by my side; but looking full at me, I believed I looked chilling, and therefore he wisely considered that love had better not be the first subject. He asked me with great deliberation, if I was fond of literature. "Literature, Sir;"—"yes, Madam, I mean as you lead a retired life, you must spend a great part of your time in reading, and consequently must be fond of it." "No, indeed, Sir, I am not at all fond of it; but I *can* read, and I *do* read, Sir, for I read the morning papers every day; and that for a lady, and give me leave to add a lady of quality, is doing a great deal."

"I beg your pardon, Madam, then I presume you are fond of the more polite amusements of music and drawing."—"Yes, Sir, you are right, I am as fond of polite amusements as any body, but not music and drawing; I should be very sorry to sit scratching paper with a pencil all day long, or to be strumming at my harpsichord to get the last lesson my master sent me, perfect, against he came to hear me play it. If I am to have music, let it be at the Abbey;

bey ; and then there is something to please the eye as well as the ear. But the amusements I like best, are routs, balls, plays, masquerades !—Oh ! how much I should like to be out all night at a masquerade ! to say every thing I chose, and to hear every thing the company chose to say to me,—I cannot suppose any thing more charming !”

“ I am sorry to find, Madam, that I have been a little deceived in your character.”—“ If you have been deceived, Sir, I am sorry for it too, but give me leave to tell you, if you have been conversing in this neighbourhood, it is no wonder you are deceived ; for they are a set of base, narrow-minded, malicious people, and no doubt would tell you that I was a poor, mean-spirited, pitiful creature, and could take no pleasure in the joys of a town life. But allow me to set you right, Sir, nobody could enjoy gaiety more than myself ; and if I was not kept here by restraint, I would live in a constant racket.” Don’t mistake me, Madam, I do not mean that any one has misrepresented your character to me, but that from my own observation of your behaviour yesterday,

yesterday, I took you to be "meek, modest,"—

"Meek and modest!" interrupting him; "and pray, Sir, has any thing in my conduct this morning given you a right to alter your opinion? Do you mean to insinuate that I am passionate and impudent! That is an insult not to be borne."—Far be it from me, Lady Julia, to wish to insult you; but as we seem to misunderstand one another entirely, and as the subject I wished to have spoken upon will be now unnecessary, I will, with your leave break up the conference." I readily agreed to this proposal, and the gentleman making a very fine bow to us, withdrew; fully convinced, that there is not one woman in the world that has a grain of discretion.

Selina was quite shocked at my method of treating lovers; but I quieted her conscience as well as I could, and we joined my father and mother in the garden, where I was obliged to inform them of what had passed, to account for the gentleman's hasty departure. My father laughed exceedingly; my mother shook her head, and looked a world of reproaches;

reproaches; all that, however, I was obliged to bear, as I certainly deserved it. But depend upon it, however flighty I may be to the beaux, I am always steady in friendship, and will ever remain,

Your affectionate,

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

LETTER X.

Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev.
Edward Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, April 8.

I REJOICE, my dear Edward, to hear you are so well satisfied with the situation of your benefice. I will certainly come and see you, as you say it will be no inconvenience to the family at whose house you reside. I have no objection to be the guest of a country parson; their wives generally make good puddings, and the husband is often a cheerful companion.

I like the account you give me of the late incumbent's widow, and the reflections *thereunto belonging*; but don't let your enthusiasm for the memory of your predecessor, carry you quite so far as it once did an acquaintance of mine, who, on taking possession of a living in the
style

style you have done, found the widow in the same predicament; and to prove to the world his admiration for the character of her first husband, married the relict, who was as old as his mother, and without a shilling but a small life annuity. She did him the honour to live many years, to convince him of her gratitude, and to give him an opportunity of every day "feeding the hungry and cloathing the naked;" which offices he performed for her some time before *she*, or rather *he* was released: since which period he has never dared to enter into another engagement. But perhaps was he to hear of Dr. Morton's fame, and his widow's sorrow, he might step forth as your rival, and her comforter, and the champion of all worthy divines departed this life.

I am in a better humour with my uncle than when I wrote last, the reason I believe is, his being in a better humour with me; and Westbury would calm the very devil himself; he has so much of the milk of human kindness in his composition, and is the properest person in the world to live with his churlish father.

Yesterday

Yesterday we dined at Lord St. Clair's, who had waited on Lord Westbury the day after his arrival, and requested we might be good neighbours—and “you my lord,” said he to my uncle, “will I hope now enter into the society of the neighbourhood, and be as gay as the rest of us?”—“Not I, indeed, I cannot visit, Sir, I have got the gout, and that is not an agreeable guest to carry abroad with one. Besides, Sir, your girl is a giggling girl, and I don't like such; they don't suit an old man; they laugh at his infirmities, and ridicule his dress and his peculiarities; not considering they are *far* worse themselves. Besides, I cannot talk nonsense to ladies now.” “But the young men can, my lord, and I will take care to entertain you, and leave the youths to chance.”—“Well, St. Clair, I will try this once, and if I don't like this visit I'll come no more; mind that, I won't be teased.”—Lord St. Clair acquiesced in this determination, and yesterday was the day fixed.

It is amazing to me, how all the people of this place yield to the peculiar disposition of this odd mortal, and take all his pettishness in good part. What
a time

a time his poor wife must have had, who, I am told, was extremely amiable; all gentleness and affability; and who is still sincerely lamented by her son, who inherits her virtues, and is said to be very like her in person as well as mind.

But where am I rambling? I meant to give you an account of our visit, which, till the moment I sat down to write has been the only subject I have either talked of, or thought upon. Wonderful, you will say, that Harry Drummond could dwell upon any one subject for twenty-four hours! But this is really the case; and I have an idea that I am beginning to grow wise. You will be very glad to hear it, I know, but, my friend, it is the charms of Lady Julia Harcourt that have for so long a time fixed my attention. Her gaiety, her wit, and her elegance, had almost quite obliterated every trace of poor Rosalia; who, with the word matrimony in her hand, passed by my imagination and restored me to myself, but not to tranquillity. How ridiculous are our juvenile attachments, and how much I lament the forming one that I fear stands in the way of all my hopes and all my preferment.

preferment. I have filled my paper so effectually, I believe, I must be obliged to give you a sketch of our visit another day; besides, we are going to ride out, in hopes!—Yes, *in hopes* of meeting Lady Julia, and her beautiful friend, Miss Courtney.

Adieu! I am ever yours. Let me hear from you soon. You know I like nothing so well as your letters,—except your very self.

Henry Drummond.

L E T.

LETTER XL.

Miss Darnley to Lady Julia Harcourt.

Wansford-House, April 5.

YOU shall not a second time, my friend, chide me for being idle. I have received *both* your favours, which are so very unlike each other, that had I not known your writing, I might easily have mistaken you for a new correspondent.

Your amiable sympathy for Miss Courtney's sufferings shews your character in the *true light*. Your flights of fancy exercised on poor Sir Robert, were fair, I think; as he was properly punished for supposing he had penetration enough to see your character in a *couple of hours*, when I scarce understand it, who have studied you for *years*. You say I am unsociable, and will neither visit you nor write; believe me I should

should have infinite pleasure in doing both.

I have had Mrs. Morton with me for some days past; she is now gone to her own house, and this neighbourhood has got the acquisition of a very amiable young clergyman; he pleased both the grave and gay on Sunday. Unfortunately for me, I had a cold, and was obliged to be confined at home; but I had the pleasure of seeing him yesterday.

The day being fine, I walked down to enquire after Mrs. Morton's health, in her new house; when I entered, she said, "my dear Miss Darnley, I am rejoiced you are come, as I expect Mr. Seymour to tea, and I wish sincerely to have you introduced to him, as I think he is the man alone who can make you happy." I smiled at the good old lady's earnestness, but assured her I could not stay tea, as I found my cold very indifferent; and as to any happiness Mr. Seymour could afford me, I was certain she was mistaken, as I had resolved never to alter my situation.

Whilst we were debating as usual, this subject, the servant announced Mr. Seymour. I confess I felt ashamed, though

though I knew not why. His address was polite, and my worthy friend introduced me with so many encomiums, that I most heartily wished myself elsewhere. I know, Julia, your curiosity to have a description of this gentleman will be great; had I your lively pen I might do him justice; but as it is, your own imagination must assist me.—Must I begin with his person? without doubt, as I surely cannot judge of his mind in one afternoon, for Julia I *did* stay—*out of mere curiosity*.

He is above the middle size, and well made; has a dark complexion, with the finest eyes I ever saw; they convey an expression of goodness in every glance; his teeth are white and regular, and his *tout ensemble* just what I would wish in a brother. The conversation was at first so very grave and languid, that I repented several times that I had stayed; however, as we became better acquainted, it took a more animated turn, and when I looked at my watch I found nine o'clock was approaching fast. I had not ordered the coach, therefore was obliged to accept Mr. Seymour's offer of attending me home.

He declined going in with me, but begged I would allow him the honour of calling the next morning to enquire after my health. He came as I expected, and sat a couple of hours. He wished much to be admitted a member of our reading society, but I assured him it was impossible, as we had refused to admit the husbands of those ladies who were members, and he had not so good a right to expect indulgence; he smiled and replied, tho' he had not the happiness of being a husband at present, it was the first wish of his heart to meet with a lady, who, with the requisites to make a matrimonial plan delightful, had the inclination to make him a husband. I told him he had better retain those ideas of the married life, but never attempt to realize them, as he would lose the *ideal bliss perhaps* in *real misery*. He begged I would allow him to point out to me the numberless comforts attending a connexion, where two hearts were united in the soft bond of sympathy and love.—“It would be giving yourself, Mr. Seymour, trouble, and be attended with little success, therefore, if you please we will call a new subject! I am to have some of my
neighbours

neighbours to tea and supper this evening, if you will join the party we will endeavour to convince you it is possible to be extremely happy, and yet not married."

But, my dear Julia, I am sure your patience must have suffered; and as I have to dress to receive my friends, I will release you, only bespeak me a place in your Selina's heart.—I have some expectation of going to London soon, as I expect a friend of my dear Mrs. Scudamore's will arrive in England, and when she comes I must see her. Write to me every moment you have to spare, as every thing you do, or say, is interesting to the heart of your

Eliza Darnley.

LETTER XII.

Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev. Edward Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, April 27.

I WRITE to you always with pleasure, my dear Seymour, but never with more than at this moment; because I never had so agreeable a subject to expatiate upon. Lady Julia is forever the burthen of my song; neither must you be surprized, or find fault, if I talk to you of nothing else. I *must* speak of her to somebody, and to Westbury I dare not, for fear of making him my rival; for tho' I hope for nothing but her friendship, I feel all the anxieties and jealousies of a lover.

Our old lord behaved better than I expected on our first visit, tho' not quite so well as I could have wished.

But

But Lady Julia has since so effectually won his heart, that he is now quite tame, and is never so happy as when we are with the family. He could not possibly take a more easy method of pleasing us, for Westbury seems quite as ready as myself to indulge him upon this head.

The first day we were at Lord St. Clair's, after having sat a while, and talked over the state of the weather (the first subject in all English parties) politics succeeded, and Lord Mordington, who is ever despairing, complained heavily of the deplorable state of the nation, and how near we were to a general bankruptcy. Just at this moment, Lady Julia, to whom I had literally been talking nonsense, happened to laugh,—“There, my Lord,” said my uncle, “you see even the serious state we are in at present, and the melancholy consequences likely to ensue, cannot for a moment check the risibility of your daughter.” “Why, surely, my dear lord, you would not have me anticipate evils?” “Certainly, Madam, I would, —’tis only by living in fear, we have any chance of avoiding danger; and take my advice, fair lady, and even in

love affairs which are your politics, always think a man a seducer till the ring is on your finger. There's Westbury himself, I would not trust him in those matters, tho' I believe he is one of the best of them."—"Oh!" said Lady Julia, laughing, "I believe he is a very tyrant." "No, madam, he is no tyrant, he is one of the very best young men in the world, and I wish you had just such another for a husband.—I don't choose he should marry yet, so don't you seduce in your turn." "I cry you mercy! my lord, but I make no promises, so take my hand and let us go down to dinner!" which was at that moment announced, and my testy uncle was blessed with the fair hand of her ladyship to the dining room. But just on entering the door, another cause of vexation occurred, for the two fair friends coming very near, the feathers in one hat, and the flowers in the other became entangled, and lady St. Clair was called to set them at liberty.

Lord Mordington was very severe on the present fashions, on their absurdities, their inconveniencies, and a thousand &c's. He told the ladies how much more beautiful they would have looked

looked dressed in the mode their grandmothers followed, who wore pretty little fly caps, with long lappets, and a handkerchief laid close to their bosoms. Lady Julia made no reply, but was very attentive to his description, and looked very arch, as if she thought "more than met the ear."

The ladies sat longer than usual after dinner, to my great joy, for not being a votary of Bacchus, I always lament their departure; and detest the conversation that usually follows it. Westbury and I soon claimed the privilege of going to talk nonsense in the drawing-room, and left the old lords to settle the affairs of the nation.

Nothing could be more animated than the conversation of the ladies! Lady St. Clair is cheerful, well-informed, and desirous of seeing every one easy and happy in her presence; and Lady Julia! how can I describe the charms of her wit, or the lustre of her eyes? how artless and innocent, yet how gay and lively! and how pleasantly she seems to sport with every subject.

Westbury asked me on our road home, if I thought her handsome? "I
 E 4 protest,

protest, my Lord, I never once thought about her face; if she is not so, I have not discovered one failing feature; and if she is, the beauties of her mind entirely eclipsed those of her person." "A very pretty jesuitical answer; but I perceive by it, that it is the *tout ensemble* you admire. I think her very pleasant for an hour or two; but her spirits are so good, that I have no idea they can always remain the same. Miss Courtney seems to me to have the more equal temper." "May be so, but she is so grave, I am certain I shall never be better acquainted with her than I am at present."

We have met these two friends almost every morning; having talked of riding, and finding it a favourite exercise of the ladies, we spoke of the prettiest rides, and by that means found out those they most frequented; and by going *accidentally* that way, have ever been so fortunate as to meet them, and we are now upon the most agreeable terms of friendship and familiarity.

Our visit was returned before the end of the week, but guess our surprize, on handing the ladies out of the carriage, to see Lady Julia dressed exactly in the style of her grand-mother, as described by

by my uncle. It was impossible she could disguise herself; but equally impossible to forbear laughing at the contrast between herself and Miss Courtney, who was perfectly elegant in the present taste. Lord Mordington took it as the highest compliment, and has absolutely been in good humour ever since; and Lady Julia blessed herself for having been the cause of it.

Adieu, I shall write all night at this rate, would my paper but allow me; but I have only room left to subscribe myself,

Your very affectionate,

H. Drummond.

LETTER XIII.

The Rev. *Edward Seymour*, to *Henry Drummond, Esq.*

Wansford, April 30.

I THANK you, Drummond, for your caution, it was friendly, and I hope I shall profit by it; but poor Mrs. Morton is too sincere a mourner, for me to have pleasure *even* in *your* trifling on this subject.

I have been now a month in my parish, and therefore can speak with some degree of certainty of the comforts I experience, and the politeness of the neighbourhood.

There are only three families in the village, besides that I am with. The first I shall mention is a Mr. Hargrave, who has his estate of about £. 400 a year in his own hands, and therefore may be called a gentleman-farmer; he
has

has an agreeable wife and several children. The other two are Mrs. Moreton's, and a particular friend of hers, a maiden lady, who lives by herself upon a small fortune, and is blessed with the love and admiration of all who know her, for her many amiable qualifications.

About a quarter of a mile from the town stands a neat modern-built house, whose owner's name is Miss Darnley. It would be a difficult task to give you a description of this charming young lady. She is her own mistress, and has been so for four or five years; and tho' she has had a variety of lovers, she has refused them all, and steadily declares she will never marry. She is a blessing to the whole neighbourhood; she relieves the wants of the poor, and comforts the afflicted; wherever she appears the prayers of all beholders follow her, and yet she is unaffected, polite, and affable.

After this description you will begin to feel some apprehensions for your friend; in truth, Drummond, had I the least hope to build upon, I should confess myself in love. I know you will laugh at me, but do your worst, the
 bist amiable

amiable Eliza has convinced me I had a heart to lose. I have spent much time with her since I came, and always met with a polite reception, but it is that of a person who is never to be more than a visitor. It is with some degree of restraint, and keeping a constant guard over all my words and actions, that I conceal my attachment to her.

I was reading prayers the other morning, and she came into church after I had begun; and would you believe it, Drummond, I made a full pause, and am sure for a minute could not find out the place where I should be. I felt so ashamed at this weakness, which appeared to me much beneath a man of my profession, that I never cast my eye towards her the remainder of the service.

When the prayers were concluded, I went into the vestry till the congregation were all gone; you will believe I felt a little conscious. Miss Darnley's servant came to me, and said his mistress wanted to speak to me. I hastened to her; she begged my pardon for sending for me, but she had a petition to present; it was from my gardener, whom I had discharged for ill behaviour. She said

said she could plead little in his favour, but that he had a wife and large family who would be destitute. The man himself had promised to behave better if I would forgive him.

You may be sure I instantly complied with her request, and handing her to her carriage, which was waiting, I added, I should have been extremely happy, if she would as readily have granted my first request. Had it been in her power, she said, I should not have repeated it twice.

You may remember the request I told you was to be admitted a member of a reading society, which is held at her house once a week. The books are history and poetry, and occasionally a French novel, but they are never allowed one in English. No bad plan this to join improvement with entertainment.

I had a great desire to make one of so agreeable a party, and Miss Darnley is the only member who objects to this proposal. I told her if she would admit me I would read aloud to them at all times, and never make my appearance till tea, and withdraw before supper. She smiled at my proposition, and said,
if

if it were in their power to allow me to become a member, I should not be excluded at any hour; and that she had no doubt but I should be an agreeable addition to their society.

I stepped after her into the coach, and as I fancied she began to relent, I continued to urge her; "Are you, my dear Miss Darnley, determined equally to resist all importunities from the gentlemen? You can be happy, it seems, without their society; but charity should induce you to extend your ideas a little beyond *self*, and reflect how much you make them suffer." "Flattery will not do, Mr. Seymour; I do not boast of any power over your sex; neither do I wish for any."

By this time we had reached Wanford-House, when, as the coach drove to the door, she said, "I fancy you are not to be told, this is the day on which we hold our *meeting*, which must be my apology for not requesting your company. Before I had time to reply, the servant told her there were some Ladies and Gentlemen come to dine with her from the next market-town; she then said, turning to me, "I will entreat in my turn that I may be favoured with
your

your company, as I shall send an excuse to my friends at Wansford."

I accepted the invitation, and stayed till eleven o'clock, when I walked home in a very rainy night, but I felt it not; Eliza engaged every thought and every feeling. I am at present however far from well, the agitation of my mind, joined to an indisposition I cannot shake off, renders me unfit for any company. I have not left my room to-day, and this letter has been written at several intervals.

A violent head-ach obliges me now to lay down my pen. Let me hear from you soon. You know how much I admire Westbury's character, therefore let him often be the subject of your pen, and sometimes your Julia. If you are in love, you deserve the pity of your

Edward Seymour.

L E T.

LETTER XIV.

Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev.
Edward Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, May 4.

"IT is a folly to be wise at all times." This is one of my maxims, and a very favourite one too; it must therefore be my excuse for the joke about the widow, which I see you did not relish: But I hope you will do me the justice to allow, that tho' I can sometimes *jest*, I can also *feel*. So far, so good, and now to that subject which is the summum bonum of life; the ruling principle in *my* breast, I freely confess, and it seems to have taken pretty fast hold of *yours*.

I heartily wish you success with your fair insensible; you are a handsome fellow, and have such a winning address, (as my old aunt used to tell you,) that I
don't

don't think you need despair. You do want a little of my confidence to be sure, but perhaps a real passion may inspire you with that; only I beg you won't fall sick, for I have no idea how a woman can like a *puny* lover.

Mercy on me! here have I written almost a whole side of paper, and don't see the word *Julia* in any one line; yet that is a word that arrests my eyes, my ears, my heart, and my understanding, if ever so faintly expressed. Certainly she is the most charming woman in the world. We carry on a very considerable flirtation, all *in jest*, and only to plague that coxcomb Selwin, who is at the Abbey, and is her relation it seems, and who, I believe, fancies himself in love, but he mistakes the object. I could let him into the secret, would he consult me, and tell him at once, that the object of attention is his own sweet *self*, and not his incomparable cousin.

But he loves shew and parade, and as her fortune will be large, no wonder it should attract so frivolous a mind as his. Now I declare to you, that I would take her without a farthing, could I gain her heart, (that inestimable treasure)

sure) and were I at liberty and free to chuse. Alas! that juvenile indiscretion! how close it sticks; and how perpetually does it present itself, and damp my happiest moment!

I dare say Lady Julia must think me a strange mortal; for when I am in my highest spirits, when I am gazing at her with rapture, this horrid thought, like a gorgon's head, comes and turns me into stone. I sit for some moments insensible to every thing; till a kind word from her rouses and brings me back to life and (whilst I can banish this phantom) to bliss, which she only can bestow.

I believe we did not profess to be lovers when I wrote to you last, but as I love talking, I will tell you the prelude to it. You will say I write like a boarding-school miss to her confidant; but whether you read or not, I must write on. You know I always follow the impulse of the moment; no great wisdom this I own, but *that* is a qualification of which I cannot boast! but you may teach it me if you can, it may perhaps save me some heart-achs, and the sooner you set about it the better.

We were sitting one morning in Lady
Julia's

Julia's dressing-room, the usual *partie quarrée*, Miss Courtney, Lady Julia, Westbury, and myself; the subject was love, and each had given a description of the sort of nymph or swain most approved. "And what sort of a mortal is doomed to wear your chains, Lady Julia?" "Why, something out of the common track, I assure you. He must not be a despairing lover, but in general gay and airy; never sigh in my presence but by mere accident; *never* talk of *dying*, because if I really liked him it would be cruel; and if I did not, I should not care a straw whether he lived or died. Then he must not be too attentive, or deprive me of the use of my limbs by anticipating my very wishes. I would not have him come the length of a room, for instance, to take up my scissors; nor run against me out of politeness, when I rise to wring the bell. Not to fondle and tease my dog out of affection to its mistress. Then I would not have him come so near as to tread upon my apron, for I hate dirt. He must not continually tell me that I am as beautiful as an angel, because, as I look in the glass every time I come near one, I am quite as sensible of that as himself.

himself. He must sometimes contradict me, which, if we often converse will be necessary, as I boast of no infallibility of judgment; and I should hate servility in a man who professed himself desirous of pleasing me. These are a few traits of the sort of lover I should like.

“ Ah ! could I but find,

“ I care not for riches,

“ A man to my mind !”

“ But his person still remains to be drawn ! I am mighty indifferent about that, only I should choose him to walk erect; to have *two* eyes, and those dark and expressive; and his teeth even and white; and as to the rest, Selina, you may finish the picture if you please.”

“ Not I, indeed,” and she looked at her with an archness I thought her incapable of, and which brought the colour in Lady Julia’s face; and of which she seemed so conscious, that she did not look up for some moments.

The silence was at last broke by your humble servant, “ I declare to you, Lady Julia, I believe I could accommodate myself to the sketch you have drawn, would you but take *me* upon trial; and if in a fortnight I don’t prove quite

quite to your wish, discard me as not worth farther pains. As to person I cannot be a judge myself, whether I am *quite* as you wish or not, I have *two eyes* 'tis true, but whether expressive or not, you, ladies, must determine, and love alone can add that grace."

"Take him at his word, Lady Julia, said Westbury, he is an odd mortal, and may afford you some entertainment; besides, it will be charity to give him some employment." "I vow I don't know but I may accept of him, it will be convenient enough at this juncture, when Selwin is coming with a fixed design of stealing my heart; but take notice 'tis all in jest, for I would not be *really* in love for a thousand worlds."

"Agreed, my fair enslaver, and now take notice, Miss Courtney, that Lady Julia from this moment allows me to make love to her whenever I am in the humour." "No, no, good Sir, only when *I am* in the *mood*." "Very well, so be it; but observe, I begin from this moment, for there lie your scissars, and there they must lie, I dare not take them up for the world."

"Very docile, indeed, I really have some hopes of you from this specimen;
but

but if you please, as I am busy netting, you may give me them for *this once*, and you may also wring the bell, as I want some silk, and am too idle to rise myself." I flew to the bell, and rung such a peal that in a few moments came Lady St. Clair; "bless me, Julia, I was afraid that you was ill by the vehemence with which you rung?" "Oh, no, Ma'am, it was only Mr. Drummond's awkward way of doing it; he is such an impetuous creature, and so absent he never knows what he is about." A good hint for me. I made my peace with the old lady, promising not to alarm her again.

Soon after this conversation we took our leave, and arrived at home *two* minutes and a *half* too late for dinner; our old Lord's patience was quite exhausted, and we spent the rest of the day, ah! how unlike the morning.

In a few days there is to be a grand gala at the Abbey; 'tis my fair one's birth day, and we are all to put on our gayest attire. After this festival you shall hear from me, perhaps, see me, if I can persuade myself to leave this little Syren.

Yours ever,

H. Drummond.

L E T.

LETTER XV.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Levingston Abbey, May 4.

I AM exceedingly rejoiced, my dear Eliza, to find that you have got such an agreeable addition to your society, in the person of your clerical beau. I am quite of Mrs. Morton's opinion, that you would make an excellent wife for the parson of the parish; and to tell you the truth, I put so little faith in vows of a single life, made at six and twenty, that I am not without hope, that either he or some other more fortunate swain, may yet tempt you to light the torch of Hymen.

I am a little alarmed lest your London journey should interfere with a scheme we have of bringing you here against the tenth of this month; it is, you may recollect, my *birth-day*, and as on that day I have the honour to arrive

at

at years of *discretion*, my father is determined to have some very gaudy doings. I should think it would be so great a mortification to him that I happened not to be a *son*, that he would be glad to pass it over in silence; but he is very good, and thankfully accepts of me in the place of a better.

You must come, Eliza, if you can with any convenience to yourself; for we are not only to have as much company as *our* house will hold, but we have made interest with our neighbours to fill their houses also. Therefore, upon the whole, I am afraid our Company will be more numerous than agreeable. A great inducement you will say, to persuade you to make one of the party. But at least it will have variety to recommend it, and that is one of the greatest requisites to human happiness.

My father and Selina have been busily employed for some days past, in contriving embellishments for this superb entertainment. The avenue to the house is to be elegantly illuminated with coloured lamps; the band is to be concealed in the small parlour, that when you enter the hall, *sounds divine* may break upon the ear. The company
are

are to be introduced into the drawing-room, where they must remain peaceably till after tea; then, all that choose to dance, are to go into the long room, which, by the way is entirely new painted and fitted up on the occasion. Very handsome lustres are already arrived from town, and cut glass girandoles are to be placed on brackets quite around the room; so that I suppose when you enter, the blaze of light will exceed the sun in its meridian splendour.

In this place, I am sorry to inform you, *my* troubles are to begin; for it is my father's will and pleasure, that I should open the ball, by dancing the first minuet with any kind soul who will do me the favour to ask me. I am likewise to stand the last couple in the first dance, two very agreeable circumstances you must allow.

The room adjoining it is to be finished in a very elegant style, for refreshments; but that I can as yet give you no account of, for my father and Selina have undertaken the whole of that work themselves, and we are not even to see it till it is quite completed.

At eleven o'clock the supper room is to be opened ; the conducting of that part of the entertainment is to rest upon my mother ; you will agree with me that it cannot be in better hands. Two of the best vocal performers are to be procured from the Opera-House ; their singing, and the many smart things we flatter ourselves that our partners will say to us, will induce us, no doubt, to sit a tolerable time to refresh ourselves, after the fatigues of the evening. After this it will be a matter of choice, and every body left to follow their own inclinations. There will be card tables in the drawing-room, for the amusement of the grave part of the company.

Were the folly to end here I should not be so much distressed, but at twelve next day, a breakfast is to be prepared in the temple, which is to be accompanied with more smart things than I can take the pains to tell you. The company which the night before quietly took their departure, are all to be recalled ; and as *it is to be* a fine spring morning, every thing *will* wear a cheerful aspect. At two a *good* dinner, not an elegant one, is to be prepared for the tenants,

nants, their wives, &c. which will end with a ball at night as usual.

○ If all I have said on this subject will not tempt you, my friend, to come and join our party, I can only say you have no curiosity; and I am very doubtful whether my father will ever think so well of you again. But if things should not go off with as much *eclat* as he expects, how much will he be disappointed.

I have written a long letter, without once telling you that the week before last we were favoured with a visit from old *Don Choleric*, alias, the Earl of Mordington, and his son, and Mr. Drummond, his nephew, who is at present on a visit to him. Lord Westbury is an exact contrast to his father in every thing. That is the most severe thing you ever heard me say of Lord Mordington in your life, and yet I seldom spare him; but his son is the most accomplished, agreeable, sensible cavalier I ever met with. He is extremely handsome, has fine dark eyes that seem to penetrate your very soul; it would be impossible to utter a falsehood and look at him at the same time: his address is easy, his manners finished and

polite; in short, it is not in my power to give you an idea what he is; but I think the best way will be for you to come and convince yourself. You have yet to make an acquaintance with our Selina too, and you don't know how great a pleasure you are depriving yourself of by not knowing her.

Mr. Drummond is quite handsome enough for a man, though he cannot be compared with his cousin; has beautiful teeth; and such an agreeable keenness in his looks, joined to so large a share of vivacity, that it seems, if it were agreeable to him, he could at one glance hit off the ridiculous part of the whole company. I wonder how his uncle and he remain upon any terms; we have spent some very pleasant days in their company, and are already become very good friends. We flatter ourselves they will be a great acquisition to our approaching gala.

Adieu, my dear girl, let me soon have the satisfaction of seeing you here, and you will greatly oblige your affectionate,

Julia Harcourt.

LETTER XVI.

Mrs. Scudamore, to Miss Darnley.

Madras, February 2, 1787.

MR. and Mrs. Dennison are arrived from Cuddalore, they leave India in a few days, and in a few months, will I hope, behold the white cliffs of Albion.

Eleanor will see you, my dear friend, as I commission her to present you with this letter. She will give you a full account of your Emily, her looks, her words, her very thoughts; she will tell you how continually you are the subject of her conversation, and what large possessions you have in her heart. How heartily she longs to see the clouded skies of Britain, and how weary she is of the perpetual sun-shine of the East: but she will also tell you, that her discontent does not appear, offends no one, and that you and herself alone are

the sole confidants of her thoughts on this subject.

I mention this lest you should think I am grown peevish and fretful. It is necessary the mind should have some faithful friend to whom it can unbosom all its cares and anxieties; and to whom can I so properly make my complaints as to you, who have ever been indulgent to my weakness, and will forgive the frailties and follies of a heart you may command. I am sensible were I but to hint these things to Mr. Scudamore, we should be on shipboard in a month's time; as his whole pleasure is contributing to my ease and happiness. I determine therefore to wait patiently for the time he fixes, as I am certain he is not more attached to this place than myself; and it will not be delayed a moment after the proper time.

My friend has brought with her a sweet little girl, whom she doats upon, and who seems to have entirely cemented two hearts formed for each other, and who have met in the most singular manner. From this we may learn the truth of the precept so often enforced by our good Dr. Morton, "that there is no situation in life, however distressing,

sing, in which hope may not be indulged, and despair banished." That beneficent being, who sees all our actions, and judges every thought, can turn the most untoward appearances of fortune into the means of producing the most lasting happiness. Eleanor is sincerely sensible of this, and the little adversity she experienced has made her in the midst of all her gaiety and grandeur, most truly pious and humble.

I am certain you will be pleased with her; she is very desirous of your acquaintance, and bids me say how much she will think herself honoured by your notice; and if not for herself alone, yet for the love she bears your friend, she hopes you will allow her to cultivate your friendship. She is just returned from paying her visits, and as we have not much time to spend together, and it may be long before we meet again, I am sure you will excuse my leaving this scrawl to attend to my guests, and I will conclude it perhaps to-morrow morning.

I again resume my pen, my dear Eliza, to beg your acceptance of a few

trifles, the produce and manufacture of this country; every thing, but the shawl, you could get better and more elegant in London, but they would not then, I know, in your opinion, be of the same value; and you will give them a place upon your cabinet, for the donor's sake.

I have just parted with Mr. and Mrs. Dennison, who are retired to rest for the last night, under this roof. I snatch a moment, whilst Lionel is in his dressing-room, to inform you of a *legacy* Mrs. Dennison has left me. The circumstance is so singular that I cannot help making you acquainted with it.

She came to me this morning, her eyes all swimming in tears, and told me she was going to put my friendship to the test, by a request she had to make, and which to be refused would make her miserable. "I have wished to speak to you on this subject every hour since I have been in Madras, but I never till this moment could take courage to ask so unreasonable a favour; but I know the pleasure you take in serving the wretched, and you have it now in your power to make the widow's heart sing for joy.

"Tell

"Tell me this moment, I replied, what is this vast request you make; and do not delay to enable me to deserve so high a character." "I have every reason to suppose that I can ask nothing you will refuse, and I hasten to make you acquainted with the subject of my embassy.

"One of my women attendants is of so very superior a nature to all we meet with here, that I lament much the impossibility of making her a partner in my voyage. Mr. Dennison does not choose I should carry more than one woman along with me, which of course must be the nurse of my infant. But I leave with regret an amiable woman, who has been the sport of fortune; and whose fondness and attachment to me, and gratitude for my attention to her, has quite gained my heart. I will bring her, with your leave, to let you see the legacy I wish to bequeath."

"Let me, I said, step a moment into Scudamore's study, as I do nothing without his approbation; and though I am certain of his acquiescing in every thing where human happiness is the object; I would not rob him of the merit, or of the pleasure of one good action."

In a moment I was by his side, my story soon told, and the desire immediately complied with. I returned to Eleanor, who waited, I saw, in a little suspense, which my countenance presently dissipated; and she went to seek her favourite. She stayed longer than I expected, and returned overwhelmed with affliction, leading by the hand a woman, not young, but of a most interesting figure, tall and finely made, with an air of majestic drefs; her complexion so like an European, that I was quite struck, and had she not worn the eastern habit, I should have considered her as my countrywoman.

It was sometime before any of us broke silence, when Mrs. Dennison, wiping away her tears and presenting the hand of her friend to me, addressed herself to her, and said "I leave you, my dear Orixana, to one much more capable of soothing your afflictions than myself; it is not in my power to take you along with me, if it were, we would never have separated; but in resigning you to Mrs Scudamore, I am sensible I promote your happiness; and I give to her an attendant who is faithful and will make a grateful return to the kindness,

kindness, which, on *my* account, I know she will receive. Your grief, tho' flattering to me, is an injury to yourself; and it is my last request that you endeavour to get the better of it, and exert yourself to prove to my friend the value of the gift which I bestow."

I yet held the hand of the sorrowful Orixana, who, pale and senseless, sunk fainting into the arms of poor Eleanor. The female servants we called to assist us, presently conveyed her to a sofa, where, after some time, she was restored to herself, but not to happiness, and what will be the consequence of this melancholy parting I know not; but I fear much for my new acquaintance whose heart seems to possess a fatal sensibility.

Adieu, I have not a moment more to call my own, and you must take for granted, all you imagine I would wish to say, and all you would desire to hear of yours,

Emily Scudamore.

L E T.

LETTER XVII.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Livingston Abbey, May 9.

AS the day approaches, and there is no account from you, my dear Eliza, I begin to be apprehensive lest you should either have taken your departure to town before the receipt of my last letter, or at least have determined in your own mind, not to make one in the frolic at Livingston. I believe you are right, for I don't think a birth day the time to enjoy the society of one's friends; it is all hurry and confusion, without one comfortable moment.

A large part of our visitors are already arrived, Lord and Lady Barton and their fair daughter, Lady Charlotte, came yesterday. You will scarce credit me, when I tell you, that I think Lady Charlotte increased in affectation since I saw her last. You always thought her
the

the very essence of *bon ton*, but I have now the pleasure to inform you that she is indeed the *quintessence* of every thing that is great in that art. "Oh, Heavens! Lady Julia," said she to me, "how can you bear the insupportable idea of being made a public spectacle to the whole country; every thing would cease to be an amusement to me that the *canaille* were to partake with me. I am astonished, my dear, how you can indulge your father in so ridiculous a scheme; besides, you might as well give a certificate of your age to every soul in the neighbourhood; all the horrid creatures will be able to say, it is just so many years since Lady Julia Harcourt was one-and-twenty." "Very true, Lady Charlotte," said I, "and yet that is an idea that never presented itself to me before; tho' I perfectly remember your father giving a great entertainment in Town, about four years ago, when your Ladyship arrived at the same time of life."

She assured me I was mistaken with regard to dates, but however it had the desired effect of silencing her, at least for that time, as to birth-days. We have likewise got the addition of a beau
in

in the house, Mr. Selwyn, a distant relation of my mother's. He is about six-and-twenty, a very genteel agreeable man; Selina and myself were half inclined to fall in love with him when he first *came*, but he had not been two hours in company till we discovered his character to be so wonderfully impetuous that there is no venturing to contradict him; and in an argument (by the by, he is scarce ever out of one) he supports his opinion so strenuously, and with so much warmth, that he really alarms the stoutest of us.

Lady Charlotte cannot endure his noise, it is absolutely more than her nerves are equal to, to spend an hour in his company. "Would you had never come, Mr. Selwyn, exclaims she in the most piteous style, or I had been fortunate enough to have paid my visit here at another season." All she can say gives him no disturbance, for he treats the poor lady as if she had not common understanding.

He spent a great part of last winter at Paris, and lodged in the same house with Mr. Drummond, therefore my father has sent to request his company with my Lord Westbury's to tea and supper this evening.

evening. I think I hear their carriage, and I honestly confess it is a task greater than I can impose upon myself, to sit writing here, even to you, Eliza, when I know those gentlemen are below stairs; I will, if I can, find an opportunity to finish my letter to-morrow,

Adieu.

Thursday Morning, May 10.

We spent a charming evening yesterday. Had you seen Lord Westbury, without his father to torment him, you would have been quite delighted with him; so polite and attentive in his behaviour to every body. When he converses, it is with such a manly steadiness, he delivers his sentiments with so much sense, and without one grain of affectation, that he claims the attention and approbation of all his hearers. When he speaks to Selina he is particularly pleasing; he addresses her with so much softness in his manner, and waits for her replies with such a delight in his countenance, that I am very sure he must admire

mire her. Indeed, who ever saw her that did not admire her? But I am willing to think he feels a particular affection for her; that is an idea I dare not suggest to any creature breathing but yourself.

We were very much diverted with Drummond and Selwyn; the one will no more brook contradiction than the other; but Drummond has a peculiar archness in his manner, which gives him greatly the advantage, for he appears all the time to be ridiculing ill nature, and laughing at the follies of mankind.

I must give you a description of an odd group that came this morning. We received a card from Mrs. Moore, (whom if you recollect we visited the last time you were here) to say she had a family from London staying with her, and she would, if convenient, bring them with her. My father sent an answer, to beg their company; and, as they lived at some distance, requested they might come to dinner, which was without hesitation complied with, and this morning accordingly they came.

Mr. Moore entered first, and introduced the lady, who is a little fat figure, dressed

dressed in a white lutestring gown, and, as if she was determined her height should save her nothing in the article of silk, it is made to sweep gracefully behind her at least twice her length upon the floor. She has a most elegant wig made with fine drop curls, that hang down to the bottom of her back; and a small chip hat set on one side of her head, with a profusion of white feathers and yellow ribbons; a broad yellow sash tied round her waist, and an enormous nosegay of artificial flowers; a fan, open and spread before her in her hand. I shall never forget her first *entre*. She was followed by a tall thin daughter, dressed in a superb painted tiffany, who had strictly complied with the present fashion of looking as small as possible; her brother next appeared, as smart a city beau as ever you saw; his shoes tied in the best style, and his hair made up in all the nicety of French taste.

The master of this family was the last of this elegant group, a little stiff man in a brown bob, a full suit of snuff coloured cloaths, a pair of blue worsted stockings, and a pair of small buckles, that had, I believe, been bought in the reign of Queen Anne. As soon as he
 had

had seated himself, he accosted my father, " You live very pleasantly here, my Lord ; charming house, elegant gardens, and extensive pleasure grounds ; just the way a man would wish to live that has no business to mind. A country life is the only life for happiness, my Lord ; I have got a country house, my wife and daughter are very fond of it, but my son and I have other business ; but we go every night, except Saturday ; I will tell you why we never go on Saturday, my Lord,—some people make Saturday afternoon a holiday, others receive their money for their week's labour, and so get drunk ; so I think there is more danger of *fire* on Saturday, than on any other day of the week—that is the reason we stay in town to watch ; for as I always say to Jacky, *mind the shop, and the shop will mind you*. Business well attended will turn to profit ; and indeed he is a very good boy and minds what I say to him, and that is the way to become a great man, and enjoy himself when he grows rich, as you do, my Lord, and never to be proud. Pride is a bad thing ; I never knew what pride was ; I have the same pleasure in seeing my friends when I am
behind

behind the counter in my canvass sleeves, as I have at one of my wife's routs. Never let a man be ashamed of his profession, my Lord, that is one of my maxims, and a very good one it is; experience shews it; my profession has done much for me, and I was never ashamed of it in my life. Wherever I am known, I am known for an honest man, and that is a great character as the world goes, more than all your men of quality can say. I beg your pardon, I mean no reflections upon you; every body speaks well of your Lordship, I am sure."

I thought the young lady seemed a little distressed at the volubility of her father's tongue, and therefore, like a good christian, I was willing to relieve her, and took a seat next her. I asked her if she was fond of dancing, as I hoped we should be able to have a very good dance this evening. "Oh, yes, ma'am, I am extremely fond of dancing; but I get a vast deal of it, for we have private balls very often, and my mamma and I make a point of never missing the London. I think your La'ship never goes to the London: I suppose you don't choose to come into the city; but I can assure you we have very genteel meetings,

meetings, and a vast deal of good company."

I told her I did not doubt the elegance of their parties at all, but that I was so little in town I had not an opportunity of being much seen in public; and as I found she only wished her father to be silent that she might harangue in her own way, I thought myself justified in leaving her, to acquaint you, my friend, with all that was going forward.

I have been so busy with the ridiculous part of the company, that I have never told you we have the Hon. Mr. Lesley, and his sister, staying with us; they are just such kind of people as you would like. I cannot bestow a higher panegyric upon them.

I intended to have asked Selina to assist me to-day in writing to you, but to say the truth, she looks so beautiful, that I cannot bear the thoughts of her being absent from company, tho' but for a short time, so you must content yourself with hearing less of our proceedings. Her dress is a thin muslin, glazed, and black ornaments; indeed she is a lovely figure. Our neighbours will be coming soon, and then I declare I will not write any more this evening.

Lord

Lord Mordington is to be here; you may suppose that is a great compliment to me, but somehow I am become a mighty favourite of his lately. Selina is to dance the two first dances with lord Westbury, and your friend with Drummond. I am sorry to add we are to change partners, for I am sure we cannot meet with any body more agreeable to us.

I must be obliged to confess there is a sort of flirtation between Drummond and myself, but it is a very strange one; he is sometimes so prodigiously attentive and civil, that I regard the conquest as secure; and then without any visible reason, he flies to the other end of the room and don't vouchsafe even to look at me for two or three hours together. He is a strange animal, but I must suit him as well as I can.—I am summoned down stairs. Adieu, my ever dear Eliza, may happiness ever attend you, is the sincere prayer of your

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

LETTER XVIII.

Lady Julia Harcourt, in continuation.

Livingston-Abbey, May 11.

OUR ball, my dear Eliza, was as elegant and splendid as my father's heart could have wished. The company seemed to enjoy their entertainment, and during tea, the gentlemen were so extremely brilliant, and said so many smart things, that they made that part of the evening, which we expected would be the most heavy, quite the contrary. I hold it however impossible for a company of mortals to spend five hours together, without some cross accident to interrupt their mirth; and so it happened to us.

I had the honour of dancing the first minuet with Lord Westbury, he was then desired to take out another lady, and he very properly led out Selina. She

She looked lovely indeed, and danced better than I ever saw any body.

As soon as the minuet was over, Lord Westbury seated himself next her, and they seemed so entirely engaged in conversation with each other, that I verily believe they did not condescend to cast one glance towards any other object, for above two hours. I observed old Testy did not like it at all; he was in a continual fret, but he had been in such violent good humour all day, I had no fear his temper would forsake him at that time.

When notice was given for the country dance, lady Charlotte declared herself quite unequal to the fatigue, the very idea was insupportable, consequently Lord Westbury handed Selina to the head of the room; Drummond and myself walked quietly to the bottom. Lord Mordington could no longer bear it, "Why, Charles, you puppy!" exclaimed he, "what are you doing? why don't you hand Lady Julia to her place?" "Lady Julia is engaged, Sir, and wishes to stand at the bottom. I am going to dance with Miss Courtney."

"You

“ You are going to do no such thing, Sir; it is all a plot, a contrivance between you and Henry to torment and vex me; your whole pleasure is to make me miserable. You knew it was my wish you should dance with Lady Julia, and for that reason you suffered Drummond to ask her, and you must take Miss Courtney, a girl that nobody knows.”

Here my father took the alarm! “ It is to me, my Lord Mordington, you must answer for these words; Miss Courtney is my ward, and I will not suffer any soul breathing to treat her with disrespect. Her family is full as genteel as any in the room, and give me leave to add, that those people do not know their loss, that are unacquainted with her.”

Poor Selina! you will feel for her situation! the eyes of the whole room fixed upon her; every body waiting for her to begin the dance.

At this juncture, the amiable Lefley, with a heart ever ready to relieve the distressed, joined to a strong desire of making himself agreeable to Selina, came to her relief, and requested he might have the happiness of going down
the

the dance with her, and he would then resign her to Lord Westbury. My father took her hand from Westbury, and gave it to Lesley. "Aye, do so, do so, said Don Choleric, and then Charles shall dance with Lady Julia." "Indeed, he will not, my Lord, said I, it is Mr. Drummond I have promised to dance with, and I make a conscience of never being worse than my word."

"What, do *you* conspire to tease me? Have you joined in the league to make my life as miserable as possible? Speak to her, my Lord St. Clair, and insist upon her doing as she ought." "I beg, uncle, said Drummond, if you don't choose your son to dance, you will not interfere with my happiness; the world shall not oblige me to give up my partner, and therefore,"—

"Hold your tongue, Henry, hold your tongue, don't provoke me; you will put me in a passion, and then you don't know how you may get me appeased again. I am not often in a passion, but if you once provoke me, you don't know where it may end."

"Why then, my Lord, to make the matter short, and prevent bad consequences, I believe it will be best to let

Julia follow her own inclinations ; she is a perverse girl, you know, and not much used to contradiction ; and you, my dear Selina, will call this first dance with Mr. Lesley." This was a sort of compromise, and therefore to be complied with. Lord Westbury folded his arms, and retired to a seat in the corner, more out of humour than I thought it possible for him to have been.

Lady Charlotte blessed her stars that Lord Mordington was no relation of hers, for he had thrown her into a nervous tremour she had no hopes of recovering for a month to come. The city miss looked as if she would have said we have no such brutes at the *London* ; and her brother seemed to say, he would rather watch the shop every Saturday night for a year to come, than Papa should scold him so much. I believe we were all a little disconcerted, but a short time restored us to our former selves.

As soon as the dance was over I observed Selina go up to Lord Westbury, and with the sweetest smile in the world, told him, " she was afraid she had been the cause of much uneasiness to him this evening,

evening, by drawing upon him his father's displeasure; she intreated he would not think of dancing with her, as she would not for the world do any thing that might give offence to Lord Mordington."

"You the cause of uneasiness to me, my angel! said Westbury; impossible! it is from you alone that I can ever hope for any earthly joy or satisfaction. Tho' my father's petulance may render me truly uncomfortable, it shall never prevent me declaring the most unalterable, unchangeable affection for my Selina!" As he pronounced those words he pressed her hand to his lips with so gallant an air, and looked at the same time so beautiful, I don't think there are many of us cruel fair ones, (*except you, Eliza*) that could have withstood him.

As no part of this pretty speech was intended for me to hear, I thought it time to move my quarters before it was discovered that I was in the secret. Now perhaps you will suspect me of being a little spiteful, for it appears very plain to me, through the whole of this scene, that the worthy old gentleman intended me for his son, had not

Selina's superior charms supplanted me. But don't mistake, my dear, so generous and disinterested am I, that I can with pleasure resign him to my friend; and if the fates ordained it, could be well contented with the nephew, who, no doubt, in point of outward accomplishments is inferior to my Lord Westbury. So depraved you see is some people's taste.

Lord Westbury refused to dance, but took his place at a card table till supper was announced; he then seated himself next to Selina, and the rest of the evening passed off with the utmost conviviality and good humour.

I had almost forgot to tell you, I was much disconcerted by my father introducing Captain Douglas at dinner, whom you may remember I met with in the Park the last time we were in town.—I am called for. Adieu, my dear friend, believe me yours with the most unalterable affection,

J. H.

L E T

LETTER XIX.

Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev.
E. Seymour:

Westbury-Lodge, May 11.

IN my last, I desired you to begin to teach me wisdom; I now sit down to beg you will give yourself no trouble about a task so difficult. I am determined to live and die in the folly that now possesses me, that of loving, without daring to hope for a return; but the object is of so superior a nature that such reverence appears to me a part of my duty, and I yield entirely to so charming an impulse.

You perhaps expect an account of the company, and the entertainment of yesterday, but I describe no such trivial matters, oh! that I could paint to you, as I feel, the merits of that amiable woman who deigns to call me friend! yes, and she calls me by that dear name in
G 3 earnest,

earnest, Seymour! There is happiness sufficient to intoxicate a stronger head than mine. But whither do I ramble? let me begin the story, which I am sure I shall tell wretchedly, but you *must* know it.

After dinner, when every one had drank his glass in honour of the day, and when the good wishes of the guests had brought tears into many bright eyes, Lord St. Clair was called out upon business. After a little time had elapsed he returned, leading by the hand an officer, young and handsome; all eyes were upon them, but our attention was particularly arrested, when going up to Lady Julia, he said, "'tis to you, my dear girl, this gentleman is desirous of making his acknowledgments; 'tis from you, he says, he has received his present happiness, and he wishes, in the most public manner, to assure you of his gratitude. On no other day would I have distressed you with this scene, but now! when your merit has confirmed my felicity in the most unexpected manner, you must for once bear with the peculiarities of a fond father, and allow this gentleman, (what he is so desirous of doing) to tell the story, in which you bear so conspicuous a part."

Good

Good heavens ! what were my sensations at this moment ? Julia was overcome with confusion, she was ready to faint in the arms of this stranger ; I thought I beheld the lover ready to receive the hand of his fair mistress. In short, every possibility, and every impossibility, that could present itself, overwhelmed my mind. But Lady Julia was retiring ; with a faint voice she intreated her father's leave to withdraw ; I saw her quit the room ; the youth remained, and I was riveted to my chair.

When the female part of the company had retired, and Lord St. Clair was convinced his daughter's indisposition was only occasioned by this circumstance, he desired the young gentleman would in a few words, satisfy the curiosity he had raised, and relate the manner in which his daughter had been the happy means of his good fortune.

“ With pleasure, Sir, shall I give the history of that benevolence, which has brought back to ease and tranquillity, a family once sinking under their woes.

“ It is now above twelve months since my distress was at its summit. — The soldier of fortune, I had early in life the imprudence to follow the sensations of my heart, and make a generous girl the partner of my poverty; with her hand she freely gave me her fortune; this was small, but our sanguine ideas thought it an inexhaustible fund, and we flattered ourselves that before our little store should be entirely gone, some happy moment would reward two faithful hearts. How ideal was this expectation! We had no friends that were able to assist us, and in vain did I expect promotion without money, the grand mover of every earthly happiness. The few hundreds which we once possessed were soon spent; our family increased, and so did our necessities; and on the birth of our fourth child we found ourselves greatly in debt, and our creditors clamorous. I was now obliged to take a small apartment within the verge of the court, and having obtained leave of absence for a few months, in this place, I shut myself up, seldom or ever taking the air even within the limits. My Charlotte’s spirits began to fail, the infant at her breast

breast could not there find sufficient nourishment; and we ourselves had hardly the means of continuing our existence.

“ In this state I one day strolled beyond my bounds; lost in thought, not daring to look back on the past, and despairing of the future without knowing whither I wandered, I found myself by one of the canals in Hyde-Park. I debated in my mind the horrid thought of putting an end to my existence! My wife and babes still presenting themselves in all their glowing colours. One moment I receded, the next advanced; and in this manner I fancy I had spent about half an hour, when the sound of horses feet roused me from my perplexity. Looking up I saw myself observed by a lady on horseback. It was early in the day, and I had thought myself quite unseen till this moment. Shame, and a thousand crowding sensations made me quit a spot which had given birth to such fatal ideas. I walked slowly away, my eyes fixed on the earth, till passing the lady, I heard something fall. I turned round, and beheld an elegant purse. It must be the property of the fair horse-
 G 5 woman.

woman. I took it up, poor as I was, my honesty did not for a moment forsake me. "Begone, temptation, said I, I have had enough of thee; let integrity guide the reins." I flew back, calling as I ran to the attendant, who followed. "Stop your lady, that I may return what she has lost." I presented the purse, and bowing, turned away. She called me to her. "Sir, you have had the good luck to take up a trifle of little use to me, perhaps *you* may not look upon its contents with the same indifference. I flatter myself you will pardon a little stratagem, made use of to try if my conjectures were well founded; the state of mind I have just had occasion to observe must have some cause. If the want of what that purse contains, occasioned the perturbation I have remarked, take it, and believe I would do still more to serve the unfortunate."

"Gracious God! I exclaimed, hast thou sent an angel to minister to my distresses! to restore me the lives of a wife and children! or is it a mortal thou hast endowed with such humanity?" "It is a mortal, Sir, weak and erring as yourself; go home to your family,

mily, make them easy if possible, and be to yourself; if this trifle is not sufficient for that purpose, in a little time I can do more; give me your address, 'tis all the return I ask, and haste to the relief of your family." "I had a card in my pocket, and just strength enough to give it, when leaning against her horse, I could hardly support myself from falling; a starting tear at this moment restored to me my faculties. "Tell me, I said, what name is it I must teach my little ones to lisp? for whose felicity they must offer up their daily prayers? and I will go and bless them with the news of still having bread to give them."—"That, said my benefactress, is a matter of no consequence, in a few days it is possible I may myself call on Mrs. Douglas. In the mean time I wish you all possible happiness."

"I returned home with a heart as light as the air I breathed, and on entering my own door met the bailiff whom, before I had so cautiously avoided. "Come in, friend, I said, I no longer fear you, I have the means to satisfy your demands:" (for I had the curiosity to look at the contents of my purse, I found there ten guineas, and a forty pound

pound note.) Thirty was what this creditor required, and a very short time finished the business to our mutual satisfaction. My wife trembling and fearful durst hardly ask by what strange event I had come into possession of such a sum. "It is broad day light, surely you have taken no illegal means to procure it?" I had no difficulty of convincing her all was well, and on hearing my story her gratitude was almost superior to mine.

"I spent a charming hour with her and my little ones; and then set out to defray my only remaining debt; it was to the taylor, who had been very merciful to me, and I could not answer it to my conscience to delay longer the payment when it was in my power. I apologized to him for being so dilatory, and told him my necessities were the real cause.—An officer was in the room who bore marks of hard service and stealing age. "Young man, (addressing himself to me) you seem honest, I am sorry you are poor; let me into your history, and though I cannot now assist you, perhaps sometime it may be in my power. I expect in a little time to be rewarded for these maimed limbs by
a regiment;

a regiment; give me your name, when that happens I will remember you." I told him every thing I have now related, and the old gentleman's eyes were filled with sympathetic tears; from that moment we have continued our acquaintance, and yesterday I received from him a captain's commission in the regiment he has at last obtained. We are going to India immediately, but I could not leave England without paying my respects to the author of all my good fortune, who has been unceasingly kind to my family, and has often blessed us with her society. This, gentlemen, is "my round unvarnished tale."

'Tis unnecessary, Seymour, to tell you the comments upon it; your heart will anticipate them, and I think it is a story that will please you. Adieu, to-day we are going to a rustic dinner still in honour of this enchanting mortal. I have not a moment more to throw away upon you; very soon you shall hear again from your

H. D.

L E T.

L E T T E R XX.

Lady Julia Harcourt to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, Saturday, May 18.

I AM happy to inform you, my dear friend, that our tumultuous gaieties are all over, and that we have once more returned to our former peace and tranquillity. Our guests have almost all taken their departures; we have none remaining but the Lesleys, and cousin Selwin. But why *happy* you will say? it is not very natural for a young lady, rather of a gay turn, to be happy at the conclusion of balls, public breakfasts, &c. and at the departure of a great deal of good company from the house.

All this is very true, Eliza, but tho' I am fond of mirth, I do not love riots and dancing; they are, as I before proved to you, seldom productive of any thing but uneasiness, as poor Selina can witness. I love the country
in

in its simplest form; on that account our second day's entertainment pleased me more than the first. If we *are* to have dissipation, let it be in London; there we cannot fright the humble villagers, nor turn the heads of our country neighbours. This should be the mansion of peace and innocence. The company we have at present in the house is exactly to my taste, and when joined by our agreeable neighbours, who must be an addition to every circle, we are quite complete. The manly sense of Westbury, the vivacity of Drummond, joined to the good humour of Lesley, with a little acid poured in agreeably enough now and then by Selwin, prevents our conversation from becoming either tedious or insipid. Our evenings are devoted to social converse; sometimes cards are called in as auxiliaries for the relief of my Father and Mother, who have not you know so many pretty flirtations to amuse them as young people: though I must do them the justice to say, they always find pleasure in our rational entertainments. We have occasionally a little music; Selina sings like a syren, I can, you know, quaver a little; Westbury plays in a
 masterly

masterly style on the german flute, and in short, we can all do something towards a *Crash*.

Our mornings are entirely at our own disposal. The loveliness of the season naturally leads us out of doors for our amusement; when we do not ride, Selina and myself wander forth delighted with the opening prospect: viewing with rapture the trees which are putting on their green attire, the flowerets that are just lifting up their modest heads on every hillock; or listening to the murmurs of the distant water-fall.

Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
But animated Nature sweeter still,
To sooth and satisfy the human ear.

Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and
one

The live long night; nor these alone, whose
notes

Nice finger'd art must emulate in vain.

But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sub-
lime

In still repeated circles, screaming loud:

The jay, the pie, and even the beding owl

That hails the rising moon, have charms for
me.

You will think I am become quite an
enthusiast, and can talk of nothing but
the

the joys of rural life ; as those however are so much to your own taste, I need not make an apology for enlarging upon that subject.

Miss Lesley's delicate state of health confines her to the use of the chariot with my mother. She is a charming woman, has seen a great deal of the world, and has profited by the observations she has made upon it. Her opinion is of importance on almost every subject ; I never hear her say an ill-natured or satirical thing of any body, but always ready to extenuate or excuse those that are accused. How melancholy, that so amiable a person should labour under a continued series of ill health, which renders her entirely unfit for the more active duties of life : for I am still of opinion, notwithstanding all your arguments to the contrary, that the highest character a sensible woman can appear in, is a wife and mother.

I would not, however, have you suppose, though I have sketched out to you the plan of life we pursue, according so much with my own way of thinking, that we are exempt from troubles. No such thing ; when-
ever

ever my Lord Mordington favours us with his company, we are as much tormented as if we were pent up in a populous city, and obliged to bear all the noise of a clamorous multitude. His ill humour is intolerable, and unfortunately he comes much oftner than he used to do; I flatter myself all his vigilance will not prevent Westbury continuing his partiality for Selina. But I don't know why I should say so, for I think she has almost as good a chance of happiness with Lesley, who is extremely fond of her. Miss Lesley is also very much attached to her, so that I am sure they would be a family of harmony; and at any rate it is but uncomfortable to be connected with a set of people who are not desirous of the alliance. But so blind are we to our own happiness, that Selina seems visibly pained by every attention of Lesley's, while she receives the most trifling civility from Westbury with heart-felt satisfaction. As I don't think one person can judge of another in these affairs, I have carefully avoided mentioning this observation to her.

I am very much astonished at not hearing from you, I can only account for

for it, by supposing you intend to surprise us with a visit, either in going or returning from London ; don't let me be mistaken in my conjecture. Le voilà arrivé, ce fripon, this Drummond to see if we will ride this morning. His importunities cannot be resisted. Bon jour ma très aimable, & très parfaitement amie.

Votre

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

LETTER XXI.

Miss Darnley to Lady Julia Harcourt.

London, May, 17.

FROM the fountain of pleasure and dissipation, your friend, my Julia, addresses you. I told you in my last that I expected a friend of my dear Mrs. Scudamore's from India. The moment I heard of her arrival, I left the peaceful vale of Wansford, and got safe to town about a week ago. This hasty departure must be my apology for not answering your agreeable letters; and you must make my peace with Lord St. Clair, for not accepting his invitation to the celebration of your birth day.

Wherever I am, it must be a day marked by a thousand agreeable reflections. You are a real blessing, my dear Julia, to all who have the happiness of calling you friend; without the affectation of appearing always in the right,
you

you have so many ways of making all around feel that self complacency and inward satisfaction which is the only sure foundation of real enjoyment. I do not mean to flatter you, but my heart is so warmly attached to you, that I cannot at all times restrain my pen.

I had the pleasure of hearing a most favourable account of my friend Emily, who has some expectation of being in England before many months are elapsed. Mrs. Dennison is an agreeable lively woman; when I see you, I will give you the particulars of her story, which are very romantic. She speaks in raptures of Mrs. Scudamore and her husband, and says they are extremely happy, only they have no children. As she spoke these words, she clasped to her bosom a lovely infant that sat smiling on her knee, and all the mother shone in her expressive eye.

There are little strokes of tenderness that affect one more than the most elaborate and studied speeches; this was one of those, and I drew out my handkerchief without knowing why I was in want of it. She has promised to spend some time with me, but not at present.

I have been much diverted since I came

came to town, by the numerous wants my maid has discovered that I have; and you must expect to see me a very *fashionable* lady, at least, as far as dress can constitute that character. I have been under the milliner's care to reform my gothic taste, and whenever she sends me any new things home, she attends to see I do not put them on in an old-fashioned way. In the midst of all this frippery, how my heart sighs for ease and retirement. But the folly of my maid and my milliner is not my only evil; *unfortunately* I have a very numerous and genteel acquaintance, who are so polite as to call upon me every morning, and I must either be talked to death at home, or I must fly from shop to shop, and from one scene of confusion to another, till the agreeable hour of dressing. I endeavour to behave like themselves, at least as far as my country manners will permit, but I find the conversation of the present age is chiefly made up of exclamations; and they who are happy enough to make a discovery of any defect or mistake in a friend or acquaintance, are sure of universal applause.

Methinks

Methinks I could be as severe (tho' tending to a different point) as the company I now associate with, upon the follies as well as vices of the age; Pope's description is but too just

"A youth of frolic, and old age of cards."

But my railing at the world will not reform it, therefore I suffer myself to be dragged from one place of public resort to another, with all the patience of a stoic; and please myself in reflecting better things are in store for me. Such conversation, my dear Julia, I intend to leave in three days, and recompence myself for what I suffer here, in the agreeable society at Livingston.

Tell Lady St. Clair I will do myself the honour of spending a week with her, and I shall in that time I hope learn as many amiable virtues from her, as I have been losing hours with the gay company I now keep. I wish most impatiently for the day when I shall once again see my friend, my Julia, my companion. I love you so sincerely that the prospect alone of being with you gives a glow of pleasure to my bosom, easier felt than described. You must prepare Selina to love me; being your friend,
ensures

ensures her a place in my heart. I shall have great pleasure in seeing one who stands so high in your esteem.

I begin to fear for your poor heart; Drummond seems to be gaining ground fast; I hope he will not prove a traitor and steal it quite away, but he seems very well inclined to give his own in return, and *mutual* love has long been your criterion of happiness. That you may enjoy it, with every advantage, is the ardent wish of, your

Eliza Darnley.

P. S. I have not forgot your insinuation about Mr. Seymour, but have not now time to answer it. When I see you, I pray you be sparing of your raillery.

L E T.

LETTER XXII.

The Rev. *Edward Seymour*, to *Henry Drummond, Esq.*

Wansford, May 16.

YOUR letters, my dear Drummond, have for some time given me much concern. Your lively imagination has often hurried you beyond the strict bounds of propriety; but whilst your heart took no part in these follies, I flattered myself you would soon return to reason. I am sorry however to observe, that these gaieties are at length become *criminal*.

Excuse me, Drummond, if I seem a little harsh in my expressions; it is not a time to study flowery metaphors, when a friend is in danger of losing that integrity which gave additional lustre to his other virtues. Your conduct towards Lady Julia is certainly reprehensible; and in a still deeper shade will you appear, when you consider your engagement with *Mademoiselle Sanzey*. By

every art you were master of, you endeavoured to gain her love, and now leave her to regret her folly in years of future misery; and all this to indulge a very culpable vanity. You have been received a second time into an amiable family, and are repaying their kindness to you by betraying their only child into a false hope of happiness; and will leave her in the same easy way to lament her credulity. Thus, Drummond, you will have made two amiable women unhappy, to amuse an idle hour.

Ask your own heart, if you have acted with honour or with humanity. Would you betray a trust committed to you by an unsuspecting friend? how then shall you answer for your present conduct? have you not already betrayed the confidence of the friends of Mademoiselle Sanzey, and are you not about to ruin for ever the tranquillity of another happy family? You call yourself a gentleman, and expect to be treated as such; but you should endeavour to support the character which you pretend to. How often have I heard you condemn those whose steps you are now following! recollect yourself before it is too late, and leave a place, where you are every

every moment in danger of forfeiting that honour which you have till lately so greatly prized. You condemn the midnight robber, who takes from you what perhaps you can very well spare, and which the cries of an helpless family probably have driven him to seek; but surely his crime is greater, who robs a fellow creature of peace and happiness. To your feelings, to your justice, to your religion, I apply; act like a man of integrity, and trust the rest to heaven.

I hope to hear from you soon, *but not from Lord Mordington's*; if you cannot resist a temptation, fly from it; come to me, I will endeavour all in my power to settle your disordered thoughts; particularly as at present I am in want of comfort. Miss Darnley is gone to London, and in her return is to visit Lady Julia, who I understand is her most intimate friend. The country has lost most of its charms, in her absence; let me then, my friend, persuade you to come and share with me those pleasures we here can boast; you will find a self-approving conscience one of the first blessings a mortal can enjoy. In this retreat you will recover your senses, and see the dangerous precipice which you have

H 2

escaped,

escaped; and in your Seymour you will find a sympathizing friend, who feels more than half your distresses, and will do every thing in his power to banish them.

E. S.

L E T.

LETTER XXIII.

Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev.
Edward Seymour.

Westbury Lodge, May 20.

YOU are grown a wretched correspondent, Seymour, who were once very fond of writing; what is it that has wrought this unpleasant change in you? is it love, that powerful passion? if so, how different are its effects on different constitutions; it makes me loquacious to the highest degree, and if I am not talking, I must be writing! I am sensible that my conversation is tiresome to my friends, because I seldom vary my subject. But I have found out the way to humour Westbury by turning the conversation on Selina; whose life and adventures are so interwoven with Lady Julia's, that it would be difficult to separate them had I any inclination; and I fancy I should not much offend you, were I now and then to make your Eliza

my theme. I hear she is really very amiable, but absolutely invincible.

We have been for these last three days on a visit in the neighbourhood, and were not able to see our friends at the Abbey till to-day. We went early, and were shewn into Lady Julia's dressing room (which is the levee room in the morning); she met me with a sorrowful countenance, singing the following song,

"Where's my swain, so blithe and clever?"

"Why has he left me all in sorrow?"

"Three long days are gone for ever,

"Since he said he'd come to-morrow,

&c. &c.

Her affected gravity did not long remain; she suffered me to make my peace with her; and while Westbury and Selina were saying soft things in another part of the room, I sealed our reconciliation on her beautiful hand, and we are now as good friends as ever.

Selwyn came in and did not appear to relish the good humour and familiarity of the company at all; and still less so, when Lord St. Clair entered the room with a letter in his hand, and addressing Lady Julia, said, "I have a message for you, from Captain Douglas; he begs me

to

to present to you his most respectful acknowledgments on all accounts, more particularly for your last act of friendship." "Oh, very well, my dear Sir, I know what he means perfectly, you need say no more on that subject."

"Indeed, but I shall acquit myself of the charge; this last kindness is, being sponsor for his little boy, who was on Thursday named *Henry*, by your desire. Now pray tell me, Julia, how in the name of wonder you came to fix on this name of all others?" "Upon my word, Sir, I,—I,—don't—know,—it came into my head just at that moment; and I thought it would do quite as well as another, as he was at a loss, and desired me to decide for him."

"Very well, my dear, I have no sort of objection to it, only I could not help thinking you must have some particular *partiality* to that *name* above all others."

This last sentence was a little hard upon poor Lady Julia, who had not recovered her confusion; and her father looked at her with a very significant smile all the time. As for myself, tho' I could not mistake this little proof of her attachment, yet the distress it occasioned her, took away all the pleasure

H 4

(at

(at another time) it would have given me. Selwyn looked the very image of mischief. How can that cynic suppose himself an object of esteem, or presume to talk of love to one—

But perhaps I ought not to blame in another that presumption of which I am myself an example; or confess to you what I have had the temerity to do since this eclaireissement. On the second day of the rejoicings on Lady Julia's birthday, we were dancing amongst the village girls under an awning in the lawn, when a little enamel'd butterfly, with which her ladyship's handkerchief was fastened, dropped off, and I unfortunately trod upon it and crushed it to atoms. She bore it with *christian fortitude*, and only lamented the loss because it had been the present of Selina.

I determined at that moment to replace it by some trifle emblematic of my love, and sent to Gray for a golden arrow I had seen worn by some of my female acquaintances. I scribbled the following lines for its passport, and waited some fortunate minute to present it in.

"Go, happy trifle, to my Julia's breast,
 "And there entranc'd in joy, for ever rest;
 "Tell

"Tell the dear maid, what pangs for her I
prove,

"How oft I sigh, how very much I love:

"Say without her no bliss my heart can
know,

"Without her smiles, I sink to endless
woe."

I carried it in my pocket till this morn-
ing, and as we were coming away,
threw it to Lady Julia; telling her it was
a *riddle* I had met with some where, and
I knew she was fond of them; but charg-
ed her *not* to open it till *to-morrow morn-*
ing, or she would not be able to discov-
er its merit.

I am now living in suspense (which
Swift says is the *life of a spider*) till I
know whether she accepts or rejects my
present, and my suit. Westbury has
just told me Miss Darnley is expected at
Livingston, I shall then judge of your
choise, and tell you truly if I think you
have any hopes; till then farewell,
think of me as I am, "nothing extenu-
ate, nor set down bught in malice."

H. D.

LETTER XXIV.

Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev. Edward Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, May 22.

TELL me, my dear Seymour, what I must think of the following lines from Lady Julia received this morning?

The wandering shaft returns to tell,

It finds no place of rest;

No peaceful home wherein to dwell,

No harbour in my breast.

Returns to say that Julia's heart,

To friendship *only* true,

Turns from the sight of Cupid's dart,

Yet *turning trembles too.*

-I anticipate your sentiments on this occasion. You will say I am certain that it is the very answer I ought to have wished for, situated as I am; that her friendship is all I *can* aspire to, and *that*, she freely gives.

I acknowledge

I acknowledge the truth of this argument, I agree to my own unworthiness; but I feel it is not the return my heart has been sighing for, or (shall I own my vanity,) that I have expected.

Westbury knows nothing of this affair, and has engaged us to dine at Lord St. Clair's to-morrow; by that time I shall perhaps have recovered my usual spirits, and be ready to *convince* Lady Julia, that I am still in *jest*, if so she would have it. I now begin to think it has been accident alone that made her fix on my name for her little godson; and this very thought has almost determined me to wish *seriously* that her heart may feel nothing more for me than simple friendship. Yes, indeed, I will very soon make an effort to regain the *indifference*, the *ease*, and *satisfaction* I enjoyed before I met with her; but this day I devote to disappointed love, and to-morrow I leave to chance.

As Miss Darnley is now at the Abbey 'tis not likely Lady Julia and I should have a tete-a-tete; when that happens (which I dare not promote) I will make my confession to her, and let her judge what in my case is best to be done. With whatever she determines for me, I
will

will acquiesce, let misery be the consequence! but I have not courage to determine for myself. I can reason and resolve, perhaps as justly as any one; but my passions hurry me away, and make me err in acting.

The above was written yesterday morning, 'tis now twelve at night, and we are only just returned from our visit. Before my usual subject takes the lead, let me inform you that I admire your Eliza very much; nor do I see in her looks or manner so hopeless a prospect as you *will* apprehend. There is a softness and gentleness in her behaviour that an insensibility of mind could never inspire; and when your name was mentioned, her cheeks were suffused with a more glowing colour than they bore at our first entrance. Lady Julia introduced me to her as your particular friend; her eyes were cast down at that moment, and a *something* or *other* pervaded her whole frame, which if I am not mistaken forebodes good fortune for you.

Lady Julia, and your humble servant met not with their usual ease, but it was soon restored. I rallied her on having forgot the terms we set out upon, and told

told her I did not expect to have been treated so much in earnest as to have my gift returned. She took the hint, and rallied in her turn with much art and spirit; said, had the trifle come in any other shape, it might perhaps have had a better reception, but it came in one so "questionable," it terrified her, and she was glad to be rid of it at any rate. "By the by, says she, I believe you have broke thro' the rules I laid down on the commencement of our *jest*, for, if I remember right, I absolutely forbade all presents." "Indeed, my fair lady, you made no such proviso, nor have I broken the shadow of a commandment; therefore do not let the punishment exceed the offence, but once more extend your clemency to one who cannot exist under your displeasure." Poor soul! well, I will forgive you *this once*, but beware of a third transgression."

Now, my good Seymour, when you have done making sermons, do take up your pen to me; it really would be very laborious to any one but myself to keep scribbling at this rate without a return; and I shall soon begin to feel myself neglected.

Yours ever,

H. D.

L E T.

LETTER XXV.

Miss Darnley, to Lady Julia Harcourt.

Wansford House, June 1.

HOW sweetly pass our hours when in the company of those we love! It was with the deepest regret, my friend, that I left you; with you I feel all the joys of social life; it is only when I am parted from you that I find myself a solitary being. Your friendship is sufficient to cheer my lonely hours, and I have often told you I look upon it as the first blessing of my life.

Your Selina has delighted me. I thought Livingston-Abbey could have no addition the last time I was with you, yet Selina taught me that no situation in this state of being could be so happy but it might be improved; for her society must add to the pleasure of any party. I envy you, my Julia, her friendship for you, and sometimes cannot help regretting that I have not such a companion

a companion ; but if I am not deceived, even you will be deprived ere long of her agreeable society. Lord Westbury and Mr. Lesley, if you will allow me to be a judge, have both felt the power of her accomplishments.

Her beauty is much superior to what I expected. You told me she was handsome ; she is, in my mind, the most finished beauty I ever saw. Her person is elegant, and every motion graceful ; I fear Lesley will be an unsuccessful lover, Lord Westbury's superior accomplishments must for ever banish hope from his bosom ; I pity him most sincerely, for who can see such perfection and not love it ?

I was much struck with the manly graces of Lord Westbury's person as well as mind, he seems in every point of view formed to charm and captivate the soul ; and indeed, to proceed further in my account of the state of affairs at Livingston-Abbey, I have some fears for your *little ladyship*.

Before I visited you I had reason to believe the lively Drummond had not paid so many visits at the Abbey without stealing some part of its best treasure away ; your behaviour soon convinced

me

me I was not mistaken. I watched you all with great attention, and found love had various methods of showing his power. You, my Julia, I saw with infinite regret had lost some of that vivacity, for which you was so justly admired. That careless ease and unaffected gaiety with which you used to treat all your admirers, vanishes the moment Drummond appears; and tho' you attempt to rally, you do it with an air of constraint. Drummond's extreme vivacity is too much even for you, sometimes. I love you, my ever amiable friend, with so much sincerity, that no change can escape unobserved. Indeed, Lord and Lady St. Clair are so much engaged with their other visitors, that they have not so many opportunities of seeing you and Drummond together as I had.

I think your descriptions both of Lord Westbury and Drummond were very just; perhaps were you to draw Mr. Drummond's picture *now*, you would colour it a little *higher*. Tho' he cannot boast so much beauty as his cousin, yet there are few men superior to him in internal accomplishments.

I arrived

I arrived at home on Monday about tea time, and when I sat down alone I felt a regret at leaving you all, that almost made me melancholy; and as company is the only resource for low spirits, I went down in the evening to Mrs. Morton's. I found she had a party, therefore sauntered home again without sending in my name. However the servant told her, and she dispatched Mr. Seymour, a *special* messenger, to beg me to return.

I excused myself, as I felt a little fatigued, but I could not prevail on him to return to the company. He insisted upon staying to supper with me. I confess I was not sorry for his resolution, as I never spend my time more agreeably than with him; but, Julia, men cannot bear encouragement. No, not even the modest Seymour. He saw I was pleased with his company that evening, and he has contrived to come to tea, and stay every evening since. I am not a prude, I am sure, yet such repeated visits distress me exceedingly; and I am aware on what subject the conversation of this gossiping village may turn. I esteem Mr. Seymour as a friend, and am never more entertained than
when

when conversing with him; he improves both my mind and heart by his good sense and many amiable qualifications, but as a *friend alone* I wish to view him. Had I been older, or he married, I should have thought myself particularly fortunate in having such a neighbour to direct my studies and regulate my mind; but he is too young, and too handsome; and tho' I am resolute, the world is unacquainted with my design of living single.

My paper reminds me I must conclude. Tell Selina her merit has secured a first place in my heart, and that it will give me infinite pleasure if she will perform her promise of writing to me. Has your perverse cousin left you yet? The impression he made on my imagination will not easily be effaced; nor will it be a *short time* that can for a moment banish the loved idea of my Julia, from her.

Eliza Darnley.

L E T

LETTER XXVI.

Miss Courtney, to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, May 3.

THE privilege, my dear madam, you have given me, of styling myself your friend and correspondent, has made me too desirous of that pleasure, to let one opportunity pass me without improving it.

How sweet is the name of *friend*, to one, who like me, has felt the hard hand of adversity! yet how little reason have I to complain, blessed with the protection of this family, where the study of every individual in it appears to be only how they may increase my happiness. Lady St. Clair's goodness to me sometimes quite overpowers me; and yet not even to her can I open my heart so freely, as I can to you, my dear Miss Darnley. Your soft and sympathizing nature feels so sensibly for the distress

distress of all your friends, that to share in your pity is more than half a cure.

When I first came here, the only request that Lord St. Clair made me, was to be cheerful and happy; how much do I regret that it is the only one in the world, that I cannot at all times comply with. For *some* time, wearing the semblance of mirth, joined to the society of my ever lively Julia, had made cheerfulness so habitual to me, that I began to think my natural disposition was not so grave as I had imagined. Lord Westbury's attachment to me has once again plunged me into my former distresses. Will you, my dear friend, in this perplexity favour me with your advice and consolation; will you hold forth your kind protecting hand to guide my erring steps to the path of rectitude? how ought I to act? ought I for ever to banish myself from his presence? for whilst I thus daily see him and converse with him, whilst I am hourly a witness to so many proofs of his amiable disposition, I cannot behold him with indifference; and whilst I am encouraging his partiality for me, I am drawing down upon him the wrath of a *Father*.

How

How dreadful is that thought, even to me who have never known the sweets of parental tenderness! how distressing is the idea of acting against the will of a parent! Heaven forbid I should ever be the cause of making any one guilty of such a crime!

Lord St. Clair this morning took me into his library; he told me he was desired by Mr. Lesley to make proposals to me, and was invested with full power to make such settlements as he and I should think proper. I felt myself very much embarrassed at this proposal, but requested he would in as gentle terms as possible inform Mr. Lesley, that I *never* could be his. He seemed very much astonished at my answer. "Why, my dear Selina, said he, you cannot have considered this matter properly! you know not half Mr. Lesley's good qualities, nor how blessed that woman will be who connects her fate with his. I should wish you to take a little more time to reflect." I told him time was unnecessary, I was quite convinced in my own mind that I never could be happy with him; I should be sorry to do any thing that might give him displeasure. "By no means, said he, per-
haps

haps some former attachment: but I will not press you too close upon the subject; my love, whatever you do, let it be for your own happiness, and you will oblige me."

Shall I make an apology to you, my dear Miss Darnley, for trespassing so much upon your patience. You see what you have drawn down upon yourself by requesting me to lay open my whole heart to you; and yet I hope you will not retract your promise of allowing me to subscribe myself,

Your very sincere friend,

Selina Courtney.

L E T.

LETTER XXVII.

Miss Darnley, to Mrs. Scudamore.

Wansford House, June 4, 1789.

WITH inexpressible joy I sit down to write to my Emily; I flatter myself for the *last* time whilst she remains in India. I have been in London, have seen your Eleanor, and have spent many hours in talking of you, my friend. Her accounts are such as my heart had earnestly wished to receive, you are well and happy; and patiently support that time you are obliged to continue in India; a time however which she assures me, will not now exceed a few months: Nay, that it is even probable you may have left Madras before this letter reaches you. I am willing, however, to risk the loss of my time, rather than you should for a moment think me unkind.

I received

I received your elegant presents, and accept of them as tokens of your friendship, which I hope will continue whilst we both have life. Mrs. Dennison is just such a woman, as one may easily suppose would endear herself to all who had seen her in the distressful situations in which you describe her. She is in high spirits, and laughs and talks with such good humour and vivacity, that I regretted I could not prevail upon her to visit me at Wansford; but she would not leave Mr. Dennison, and business detained him in town.

It is impossible for me to describe the real pleasure I have in the hope of seeing you, my friend; in once more enjoying your society, which I have always esteemed one of the best blessings heaven can bestow. I anticipate the delight of meeting you after so long an absence, and a thousand agreeable scenes float on my imagination. I will not be denied the pleasure of your company and Mr. Scudamore's at Wansford, the moment you arrive. My house ought to be considered by you as your home in England; come then, my Emily, and grace those scenes you so much admire. If you will not linger, perhaps you may
honour

honour the nuptials of your friend by your presence.

Don't start, Emily: remember I am but a weak woman, and my resolutions as changeable as those of most of my sex. But one word I must say in my own defence. When I determined to live single, it was because the gentlemen I had seen did not equal my expectation, neither did it appear to me that any of them could make me happy; but this objection is removed. I have at last become acquainted with a gentleman, so amiable both in his character and behaviour, so much beloved by the world, and so attentive and affectionate to me, that if I still were to persist in refusing him, what at first deserved the name of resolution, would be now obstinacy.

But come, and you shall yourself judge of the merit of Mr. Seymour. I will not say one word more in his favour. When you are acquainted with him, I am certain you will approve of the choice of your friend,

E. Darnley.

LETTER XXVIII.

Miss *Darnley*, to Miss *Courtney*.

Wansford-House, June 6, 1789.

YOUR letter, my *Selina*, was a true emblem of your heart, and, as such, welcome to the bosom of friendship.

I regret extremely the perplexities which Mr. Lesley's offer has thrown you into; but I flatter myself in the end they will prove fortunate. The goodness of your own heart will lead you to walk steadily in the path of rectitude, and *that* you know, is the sure road to happiness.

You desire me to give you my advice: I should have infinite pleasure in doing it, if you had occasion for any; but few young people are better qualified to judge for themselves than you, my friend; yet to prove to you how ready I should be to oblige you, if I had it in my power, one thing I will advise,
and

and that is, to make Lady St. Clair acquainted with Lord Westbury's attachment to you. Her tenderness over you, and care for your welfare, entitles her to expect such a return; besides, it will be a relief to your own mind; for whilst you are acting under the eye of so amiable a lady, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are fulfilling the wishes of your best friend.

I am afraid I have imposed a hard task, but Lady Julia's affection for you will lead her to point out the least painful way of consulting her mother; tho' Julia is lively and *will* make us all feel the fallies of her wit sometimes, yet her heart is blessed with the softest sympathy, and I am sure you may with safety trust your secret in her bosom.

I think myself highly obliged by the confidence you have placed in me, and assure yourself at all times an interest in my heart, that time, or change of situation, can never alter. I should have infinite pleasure in seeing you at Wansford-House, and though Lady St. Clair absolutely refused you and my Julia to me at present, I will hope on some future day to have that happiness; at all times, my amiable young friend, look

on my house as a home, where you will meet with a heart truly sensible of your merit, and arms open to receive you.

To shew you, my dear Selina, how much I value *your* confidence, I am going in my turn to acquaint *you* with a secret which I have scarce ventured to whisper even to myself. You may recollect, when I was at Livingston, how unmercifully Julia rallied me, on living in what she calls a state of maid-ism; it is an old subject of conversation, tho' I confess I never felt it so painful before. The love of retirement has been the leading wish of my heart ever since I had reason sufficient to form a wish; I do not mean by retirement, a solitary existence without one friend and comforter, but a life of reason, such as is described by Thomson, where he says, "Oh knew he but his happiness, of man the happiest, he who from the crowd retired, &c. &c."

As I had it in my power to fix my residence where I chose, the country appeared to me most likely to produce that happiness I was in search of. A companion was the next thing I found myself in want of. A husband was certainly the most likely to be chosen by a
young

young woman in my situation. But though I had many offers, which by the world would be called eligible, my heart was still my own; most of the gentlemen that addressed me had views and schemes of life so different from what I had formed, that I determined to remain as I now am; and resolved, if I should never have it in my power to perform those active duties of wife and mother, I might at least be serviceable in other respects to my fellow creatures.

My mind, I imagined, was fully determined upon that subject, and I thought no temptation could prevail upon me to alter it. I have lived however to prove how weak female resolutions are, when they concern affections of the heart. I have spent much time with Mr. Seymour, (who you know is Mr. Drummond's friend) and find his ideas so exactly suited to my own, that in spite of all my resolutions I am *pleased* with him. I have every reason in the world to flatter myself that the attachment is mutual; and have no doubt that with him I shall experience all the happiness which

fancy has formed, and which so seldom has been brought into real life.

Pray tell Julia, and bid her spare her friend who loves you and her with truth and tendernefs. Yours ever,

Eliza Darnley.

L E T.

LETTER XXIX.

Mrs. Scudamore, to Miss Darnley.

Madras, March 1, 1787.

MY last letter to you, my dear friend, was concluded in such haste, and written in such agitation of mind, that I have some doubts of its being intelligible. But I could not part with Eleanor without great emotion, knowing the *port* she was bound to; and that it would be in my calendar many long months ere we should meet again.

The charge she left me with too, was in a state that called forth all my compassion, and the sufferings she has since endured, have endeared her to me, as it seemed entirely to arise from her affection from Mrs. Dennison and her little one. For one whole month I watched over her bed without any hopes of her recovery; her constitution at last surmounted the fury of her disorder,

der, and she is now able to walk about, and to sit an hour or two in my apartment every day.

After the scene which I described to you in my last, we thought it best she should be unacquainted with the hour of their departure, as believing her weak spirits would not bear the shock of separation. For once our humanity led us into an error; for her distress on hearing her friends were gone, beggared all description; and I believe she would have borne the ceremony of taking leave with more fortitude than she did this fatal intelligence. I was quite unequal to the sight of such poignant sorrow, and left her to the care of her country-women, who were most of them as little calculated for comforters as myself.

This poor sufferer has employed all my thoughts and attention since we first met, and it has been a matter of astonishment to many of my acquaintances, that I should decline gay parties and brilliant assemblies, for the sake of administering consolation to a poor dependant; who, (when I tell them I believe she has experienced a variety of misfortunes) are so very charitable, as
to

to think she had better die and so end them. I flatter myself, however, that I have preserved her life for some good purpose; at least I have the satisfaction to think I have been doing my duty, and fulfilling some of the intentions of my creation.

I have never yet dared to ask Orixana for any account of her life, fearful to open a wound which seems ready to bleed at the most delicate touch. I cannot bear to gratify my own curiosity at the expence of any one's feelings. Some time perhaps when her health is better established, when she has known me long enough to treat me with confidence, and believes I am worthy of it, and when she herself may wish to unburthen her heart of some of its sorrows. I may learn the concurring circumstances that have brought her at last under my protection; where I do hope the unpleasant part of her life has had its termination. It is my wish, though not always in my power, to make every one happy around me.

A truce at present to this melancholy subject. Let me give you an account of a visit I made yesterday to a country woman of yours, a Mrs. Long, who

with her husband is just arrived. He had been in India before, and having spent the greatest part of what he carried from hence, is come back to reimburse, and has brought over a little wife, about sixteen, who is in high spirits, and delighted with the splendor of her house and the number of her servants.

My first enquiry in this country, after compliments have passed, is, "from what part of England are you come?" You will guess the pleasure it gave me, to find Mrs. Long had lived "in the neighbourhood of Wansford." I did not delay a moment to enquire after Miss Darnley, and waited with all the eager expectation of friendship for an account of one so dear to me; but she informed me that you were not personally acquainted, though so near neighbours, "You were very singular in many things, and so *unfashionable*, her *Mama* did not choose the acquaintance; for you kept very little company besides the *rector*, the *curate*, and *their wives*; and *mama* said indeed there was very little to be learned from one who associates with such people, unless indeed it was a receipt for a primrose pudding,

pudding, or cowslip wine; and as it was not likely *we* should ever need those *accomplishments*, she would not take off our attention from those more *elegant acquirements necessary* for every woman of fashion that is intended to live in the world."

You may believe, Eliza, how indignant I was, and how I despised your *panegyrist*. "But surely, my dear Madam, I replied, Miss Darnley has been very highly educated, and possesses every accomplishment necessary to adorn the most exalted station." "Perhaps so, but my Mama always gave us such an idea of her, that I had not the least desire to see her. The men say she is handsome, but she treats them all with such a civil indifference, that the number of her lovers will never be great. Indeed, Long told me on our voyage, that he had some idea of her himself, but from the accounts he had of her he was convinced she would never make the figure he should wish *his* wife to do, so never went to Wansford; and if he had I suppose he would have found her with her poultry; hearing the village children their catechism; or making caudle for some poor lady in the straw."

I left

I left Mrs. Long without attempting your justification; convinced, that the most studied eulogium could not have painted your character in higher or more amiable colours than this little satirist, with her childish censure.

Go on, my best Eliza, in this excellent plan, begun so nobly in defiance of the pleasures and seductions of the world, and continued in defiance of the calumnies of the ignorant and weak. I am, ever yours,

E. S.

L E T.

LETTER XXX.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, June 9.

I HAVE just received your letter, my dear Eliza, and am truly rejoiced that you arrived safe at home, and found *all* your friends well.

We regret your absence much; but I cannot help remarking your very great anxiety to be gone. What could it arise from? You say our society was more agreeable than ever, and that you should have liked to have spent a little more time in cultivating Selina's friendship. Pray, my dear, what prevented your "spending a little more time?" could not the *family* at home dispense longer with your absence? or, perhaps you were not able to bear Drummond's noise? none of that will do, my dear Eliza, you may as well confess honestly at once, that though like Troy you have
flood

stood a ten years siege, (for I verily believe the men commenced overtures to you at sixteen) you are obliged to capitulate at last; and after refusing so many men of high birth, and wonderful achievements, you are going to bestow yourself upon a clerical lover. He is likewise a phoenix of his kind; Drummond says he is endowed with every virtue under Heaven. How happy a woman are you to meet with such a friend in these times of dissipation?

It would be rather extraordinary if you and I were to change characters, and yet I am half inclined to think it will be so; it would only be convincing each other with the arguments we each have used, for I have some thoughts of living single; and it appears very plain to me that you are bound with a fresh gale and a strong current to the port of matrimony.

I do not like, Eliza, the charge you bring against me of gravity; it is unjust, believe me, and ill founded: you are the only person in the world that ever made the observation; and I am very apt to believe it has only been in some of your pensive moments, when you have been fighting for the joys of

Wansford,

Wansford, that you have beheld me with a jaundiced eye. If *I am* to be an old maid, I will not be a grave one. I am determined to exhibit the character in a new light, and not look with a grudging eye on my young friends who are enjoying life all around me. I will make parties for the young and the gay, and when I am too old to enjoy the sprightly dance or song myself, I will participate the pleasure by beholding the cheerful group of happy mortals, that are frisking by my side.

These are the pleasures *I* shall have while you are all anxiety about the education of your family and the peace of your husband. More rational will your employment be, I confess; but we must all be content with the condition that is allotted us in this world; and I am now well convinced it is not mine to share in the pleasures of connubial happiness. There is but one man of all I ever saw, with whom I could wish to partake the joys and cares of life, and he is otherwise engaged; this may perhaps appear surprizing to you, but so it is.

Yesterday evening my father, mother, Lord Westbury, and Miss Lesley were engaged

engaged in playing a rubber at whist; the remaining party were in a different part of the room. We had discoursed on various subjects; the conversation insensibly turned on private and long engagements: Drummond was expressing his disapprobation of them in warm terms, when Selwin interrupted him, and with a great deal more passion than good breeding in his manner, said, "it ill became Mr. Drummond to speak on such a subject, who had not only entered into a long and solemn engagement with an amiable woman in a neighbouring kingdom, but was likewise endeavouring to seduce the affections of the finest woman in his own, with no other view than to leave her in the same wretched manner to deplore her credulity."

Drummond was roused by this unexpected attack into very great warmth, and replied, "that he did not understand what he meant by talking to him in that strain, and begged leave to tell him he would not bear it." "If you do not understand, Sir, said Selwin, I will be a little more explicit, though I think you cannot be ignorant that I mean Mademoiselle Sanzey; and as to your not bearing it, it is a matter of
very

very little consequence to me whether you will or no, as I never make assertions of any kind, that I am not at all times ready to support."

Drummond was about to reply in a very high tone, when Lesley interrupted them by saying, he must take the liberty to remind them, they were in the company of ladies. He immediately ceased, and making a most graceful inclination with his head to Lesley, said, "I thank you Mr. Lesley, I was indeed very near forgetting whose company I was in; but I beg pardon of these ladies, and since you have thus kindly recalled us to reason, we will for the present drop the subject. He then with infinite address gave the conversation a new turn, and they all contributed their share to support it; all but *myself*, and indeed, Eliza, I am almost ashamed of discovering my weakness even to you; but for some time I found myself utterly unable to articulate the least sentence, nor could I recover my spirits so far as to be tolerably cheerful the whole evening. And yet it was not the idea of Mademoiselle Sanzey, that tormented me, for I sincerely wish Drummond happy let his choice be where it will; but the fear of these

these two gentlemen quarrelling. Heaven knows where it will end! As soon as our visitors left us, we retired to our apartments, but not to rest; not one moment have I slept all the night. I am distracted with different ideas, and know not what measure to take. I dare not tell my father, for that would draw his anger upon Drummond instantly. I wish I could have spoken to Lord Westbury, he might perhaps have interfered. I have more than once had thoughts of breaking through all the rules of decorum, and writing a card to him to intreat him to prevent their meeting; but Selina begs so piteously that I will not engage in the quarrel, that I have given up that scheme. Selwin has not yet left his room, so hitherto all is safe.

When I began this letter I did not intend saying one word on this subject, as I knew it would hurt you; but my pen and thoughts can dwell on no other: and now how much do I wish you were here, for never till now was your advice so necessary to

Your distressed friend,

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Lord Westbury, to the Rev. Edward
Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, June 12.

Dear Sir,

I TAKE up the pen of my friend, who is unable of himself to make use of it, to inform you in *what* a moment your last letter was presented to him.

It appears from the date of it, that it ought long ago to have been in his possession; but having been directed under cover to my father, he by some unaccountable neglect did not give it to Mr. Drummond till this morning.

You may perhaps have heard from Miss Darnley of a quarrel between Mr. Selwin and our dear friend; I flattered myself I had put a stop to their proceedings to any fatal lengths, but the hypocrisy of Mr. Selwin deceived me, and I thought him satisfied by my accommodation;

dation; whilst he still nourished that horrible principle, revenge.

He contrived to have a note conveyed to Drummond unknown to me; this note, couched in the most insolent terms, demanded immediate satisfaction. An answer was as secretly returned, appointing six o'clock on Wednesday morning as the *time*, and a close walk in Livingston Park as the *place*. They were both, I believe, punctual, and met entirely unattended, each burning with resentment.

Till this day I have never learnt how this affair was conducted. Mr. Drummond has been utterly incapable of giving any account of his own misfortune, and they had no witnesses. He awaked about seven o'clock this morning, calm and sensible, and has desired me to inform you of all the circumstances he can recollect. He was himself the first on the ground, and when Selwin arrived a very short distance was marked out. At his desire his enemy fired first, and lodged his ball in the left shoulder of our friend, who fell, and was left in this condition by his cowardly antagonist; who waited not for *his* fire, but made the best of his way over the park
paling,

paling, and has not yet been heard of, though I have had people in search of him in many places.

In this condition remained my poor cousin, till the park-keeper, by great accident, came to the spot where he lay bleeding. He was still sensible, and requested him to procure some assistance, but on no account to alarm the family at the Abbey. The man was true to his orders, and came directly to me with this sad news. You may be sure I was not dilatory, and with all the help I could muster in so short a time, flew to his succour. He was entirely insensible to pain, or the inconvenience of being moved, and though we have had the best surgeons the country could afford, they have not, with all their united skill, yet extracted the ball. But as his fever is something abated, I hope all may yet be well.

It is not above an hour ago I left him, that I might write a letter upon business, and in that time, my father paid him a visit, and gave him your letter, asking his forgiveness for having forgot it so long. Would to heaven he had still kept it, or given it to him a week ago! then those excellent admonitions
might

might have prevented the fatal consequences of passion unrestrained by reason. Thank God he has borne the reading of it better than could be expected, and calls me to tell you, he loves and honours you more than ever; that it shall have its due weight with him; that he will read it till every word be engraved upon his heart; it shall lie upon his pillow, and be his constant monitor; and so long as his reason continues, he will endeavour to recollect and practise the virtues you inspire.

He wishes to see you, to convince you that his mind still retains that integrity you own it once possessed; that he submits without repining to the will of providence, whatever are its decrees. Still he is not so calm as before, and his fever seems inclinable to return. I have much pain in communicating to you this unwelcome intelligence, but it is constantly the lot of humanity to suffer for ourselves or others.

I know nothing of the family at Livingston, never having left the bed-side of my friend; love now yields entirely to friendship; I think you may possibly hear of them through Miss Darnley.

I have

I have sent to Sir Henry and Lady Drummond, and told them in the tenderest manner I could, the indisposition of their son, without hinting at the cause. I tremble at the scene they have to witness, as I am certain if they are well they will soon be here.

I will write again the first leisure moment; till then I leave you to comment on this fashionable but horrid method of redressing injuries, be they real or imaginary. I remain, with the utmost respect, dear Sir, your most obedient and affectionate,

Westbury.

L E T.

LETTER XXXII.

Lady Julia Harcourt, to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, June 14.

THE fears I expressed to you, my dear Eliza, at the conclusion of my last letter, are all reduced to a dreadful certainty. Drummond, the accomplished Drummond, is now languishing on the bed of sickness, brought to this deplorable state by the rash hand of Selwin; and your Julia the cause, though the innocent one, of all this misfortune.

Oh, my friend, you know not how much I *have* suffered! how much I *do* suffer. The desire I have to conceal it from my friends makes it a thousand times more painful to me. It has hitherto been, and I hope it will ever be my study, to be the constant cause of pleasure to my amiable parents, but now indeed, the task is a hard one; labouring as I am under the most poignant

nant anxiety, I cannot even in their presence at all times support myself. Selina is a great consolation to me; to her I can, with the most unbounded confidence, lay open my whole heart; we mingle our tears for the sufferings of poor Drummond, and not seldom shed a few sympathizing drops, for the distresses of Mademoiselle Sanzey. Oh! Eliza! if she really loves him, and who can doubt it, how much do I feel for her?

The practice of duelling appears to me in so very shocking and odious a light, that I think it must hurt the feelings of any woman, to have the man, whom above all others, she loves and esteems, engaged in an affair of that kind. I will endeavour as much as possible, to collect my scattered thoughts, and tell you the little, the very little, I know of this horrid affair.

As soon as I had finished my letter, Selina and myself went down stairs, perfectly assured that Selwin had not left his room; but how much were we surprized, upon making enquiries in the breakfast parlour, to find he had been out for above an hour. My fears were then so great that I could not conceal

them, and my father instantly observing the change in my countenance, asked with great earnestness "what could have disturbed me so much. I told him there had been a quarrel the night before between Mr. Drummond and Mr. Selwin, and from the warmth of both their tempers, I apprehended the most fatal consequences.

My father seemed to take the alarm, and was almost as uneasy as myself; but while we were debating what was proper to be done, Selwin walked into the room. I lost all power over myself, and running to him, seized hold of his arm, and exclaimed, with the greatest vehemence imaginable, "tell me, Selwin, instantly tell me, where you have left Drummond; and whether you have left him in good health, or suffering from *your* rashness." He stared at me, and with the most provoking *sang froid* replied, "good heavens! Lady Julia, is it possible, that the idea, the mere *idea* of Mr. Drummond's being in danger, can have raised these terrible emotions in your breast; I am happy I can inform you, that your *admired* friend is well, and will, I make no doubt, think himself under great obligations to you, for

for the anxiety you have shewn for his welfare." You may believe I returned to my seat with no less precipitation than I left it. My father then made some enquiries if any thing further had passed between them. He said they had met, but that Lord Westbury, who was indeed an excellent young man, had conciliated matters, and he believed they were tolerably satisfied. My father then read a long harangue on duelling, rashness, &c. &c. which I am sorry to say, had little effect upon him.

After breakfast the Lesleys left us. We spent the day without company; Selwin was apparently in better spirits and better temper than he had been for some time past. When we arose the next morning, we were not at all surprized to hear he had been gone out to ride for two or three hours; it was not an unusual thing with him to spend his mornings in that manner, and we were all lulled into such a peaceful security, that I dare say there was not one of us had the least apprehension of what was to follow.

When we were assembled in the drawing room before dinner, expecting Mr. Selwin's arrival, a servant brought

a note to my father, it was nearly in the following words :

“ Mr. Drummond and myself have fought, he is wounded, I believe dangerously ; before this reaches you I shall be on my way to the continent ; all pursuit will be in vain. Allow me to return thanks to you, my Lord, for your repeated acts of civility to me. The amiable Lady St. Clair likewise requires my warmest acknowledgments. Tell Lady Julia, it is on her account alone that I am banished from my country for ever.

George Selwin.”

To my Eliza I need not endeavour to paint my feelings at that moment ; you will readily believe the painful sensations that at once assailed me, and in an instant discovered to me the most melancholy scene in its most dismal colours. My sorrows at that time were not of long continuance, for my father had scarce finished the reading of his billet, when I sunk senseless into my chair. The kind assistance of my friends in a short time restored me to my recollection, but not to tranquillity ; nor can I ever know one moment's peace till Drummond is pronounced out of danger.

danger. Oh! my Eliza! how have a few short hours ruined the smiling prospects of your friend? how many flattering scenes of future bliss had I formed in my sanguine imagination, that are now for ever obliterated! I see the servant returning, who has been making an enquiry after Mr. Drummond's health this morning. May we receive a favourable account! I will not conclude my letter till I have heard it; and may you, my Eliza, never feel the agitation that labours in my breast at this moment.

Miss Courtney in continuation.

My poor Julia's distress has rendered her altogether unfit to add one word more. I have therefore undertaken to conclude and send away her letter; but how sorry am I to give you so much pain, my dear Miss Darnley, as to inform you Mr. Drummond is much worse this morning, and his fever higher than ever it has been.

Sir Henry and Lady Drummond are arrived, and the physicians have scarce a hope remaining. The servant says he never saw such a scene of distress; there

is not a creature in the house that can speak without tears. Drummond is universally beloved ; he certainly has, under his volatile appearance, more benevolence and good humour than is generally to be met with. I cannot however acquit him in this affair, he certainly has not behaved with honour ; there can be no doubt of his engagement to Mademoiselle Sanzey, and yet, *you* and I both agreed when you were here (and it has been much more visible since) that his attachment appeared to be very strong for Lady Julia.

Poor girl, what will become of her ? she is just now reclined upon a sofa by me, languid and motionless, without the least appearance of existence, were it not for the big tears that roll incessantly down her pallid cheeks. She is so much afraid that Lord and Lady St. Clair, or indeed any one should discover her love for Drummond, that it is only when we are alone she will give a full scope to her grief ; and I am sure the concealment hurts her. How often in the hour of distress has she soothed my affliction, and yet how unequal do I find myself to administer the same consolation in return.

I have

I have received your friendly letter, my dear Miss Darnley; it should not have been so long unnoticed, had not this unhappy affair taken possession of my whole heart. I find there is not a more effectual way to banish our own reflections than to share in the distress of a friend. But no time or circumstances can ever make me forget with how much sincerity I am your truly affectionate friend,

Selina Courtney.



LETTER XXXIII.

Rev. Edward Seymour, to Lord Westbury.

Wansford, June 14.

I RECEIVED your Lordship's letter, and am both shocked and alarmed at the dreadful account you give me of my

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poor

poor friend. I would instantly fly to offer every assistance in my power, were I not convinced that my attempts are entirely unnecessary, as he is particularly fortunate in the attention of so kind a friend as your Lordship. You will excuse me for adding, that I have long from character had a high esteem for your Lordship; and your attachment to poor Drummond proves the goodness of your heart. His many amiable qualities must endear him to all who know him. You have promised, my Lord, to write to me again; on that hope I must endeavour to rest satisfied with my distance.

The friendship which subsists between us has been uninterrupted and steady for many years; we were school-fellows and play-fellows from our earliest days. With how much tenderness I love him, my agonizing feelings at this moment can witness.

You regret, my Lord, that your father gave him my letter at such a time; but I have a still deeper source of sorrow; that letter should have been written many weeks sooner. I have been acquainted with his growing affection for Lady Julia Harcourt from the first moment

moment he saw her, and was not ignorant of his engagement abroad; I have had many proofs of the influence I have over him; how dreadful then must my reflections be, when by one word spoken in time, I might have preserved a dear friend from a crime of so black a dye, and perhaps from the grave. That thought, my Lord, carries with it a torture more severe than I can well bear.

Miss Darnley has had no letter yet from Lady Julia; I have not informed her of this dreadful accident, as it might alarm her for her friend, who I greatly fear will suffer violently on this occasion. I am not sorry Selwin escaped your Lordship's search. Is he not a relation of Lady Julia, and would not any disgrace which he might have suffered have fallen hard on the worthy Lord St. Clair? Selwin's crimes are of so dark a nature that they must for ever destroy his peace, and banish tranquillity from his breast. I am in such real affliction, that your Lordship must excuse the incoherence of my ideas.

I have only to beg your goodness in writing to me such accounts of my friend's situation as may occur, which I

shall always acknowledge as the highest obligation.

I am, &c.

Edward Seymour.



L E T T E R XXXIV.

Lord Westbury, to the Rev. E. Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, June 15.

My Dear Sir,

I TAKE the first opportunity of performing the promise I made to you in my last letter. Sincerely do I wish that it was in my power to give a more favourable account of Mr. Drummond, than I am now able; but since that time we have been constantly alarmed with very frightful symptoms; and tho' for the last twenty-four hours he has
slept

slept a good deal, yet very faint are our hopes. Though naturally inclined to look on the bright side, the picture before me is so very dark, that I am now no longer sanguine; and I find fortitude is much easier in theory than practice. Sir Henry and Lady Drummond came as I expected on the wings of fear and impatience, and arrived here two days ago. They both appear to possess so much resignation and unaffected piety, that they bore the narrative I had prepared for them, better than I expected. Lady Drummond shewed some marks of impatience on being told she could not then see her son, whose agitation was at that time so great that I was afraid the interview might injure both.

It was always my intention to conceal from them the reason of Mr. Drummond's illness; I thought this little piece of deceit allowable, (if deceit can ever be so) but my father, who is not always to be controlled, and who does not see events in the light I do, by hints, (which I in vain endeavoured to wave) gave them to understand, that more remained to be told; and I found it impossible longer to keep the secret. Now indeed they suffered! and I am sure they

they could not have experienced a greater shock, had they witnessed his dissolution. They have so just an abhorrence to this mode of revenging insults, that did not in this case the crime carry along with it the punishment, their censure of their son's conduct would be very severe; but tenderness takes the lead of every other feeling.

I found it best to attend Lady Drummond to the sick room, as soon as I could hear that all was quiet. I assisted her, with trembling steps, to ascend the stairs; at the door of the apartment she stopped and said, "let me here try to gain a little resolution before I encounter this awful scene; assist me, kind heaven, as thou hast ever done; and pardon me if I should breathe a repining sigh;" after a pause she added, "I submit to thy will." We entered the room, I gently drew aside the curtain, Drummond raised his languid eyes, but hastily closed them again, and covering his face with his hand, cried, "Charles! what is that phantom thou ledest to me? I know it, it is Rosalia come to upbraid me with her wrongs. See! see! what angry glances she darts on her faithless lover! Shield me from those
piercing

piercing looks, and tell her if I live I will still be hers, whatever may be the consequence."

Lady Drummond at my request retired to another part of the room in agonies inexpressible; I returned to soothe my friend. I grasped his hand, and sensible of the pressure, he said, "cruel Charles, why afflict me now with the presence of one I dare not think of?" I assured him it was not Rosalia, that it was his fond, his affectionate mother, come to administer health and comfort. "My mother! what a sight for her! but where is she? come my dear parent, and bless your unworthy son. Tell him that *you* forgive him, tho' there are in the world who will not say so, though he bleeds before them." His head leaned upon her bosom; her tears fell upon his face; but he was once more insensible to sorrow.

Lady Drummond has sat by him night and day. He often raves of Rosalia, and sometimes in a whisper calls on Lady Julia; but as if fearful of being heard. This is the state we are in at present. We are certain of your pity, and also of your prayers. You shall

shall hear from me again the first moment of a change. Believe me your afflicted, but very sincere;

Westbury.

—♦♦♦♦♦—
L E T T E R XXXV.

Mrs. Scudamore, to Miss Darnley.

Madras, March 7, 1787.

TH O' I wrote to you only a few days ago, my Eliza, yet as I had an opportunity of sending you the inclosed I was determined not to lose it. In looking over some papers I found a copy of a letter sent by Mr. Scudamore to his brother; as I am sure the story and the singularity of the events will amuse a speculative mind like yours, I will make no apology for writing so short a letter, which

which I have not now time to enlarge. Mr. Mandeville left India last summer, and you will agree with me he deserves to be happy.

Yours ever,

E. S.



Lionel Scudamore, Esq. to ——— Esq.

Madras.

T H E R E are some circumstances in human life which have so much the appearance of chance, that in that word of *no meaning* men are apt to overlook the influence of a superior power. That I have some reason for making this observation you shall yourself be a judge; when I relate an event, which, without the interposition of a friendly arm, might have proved fatal to me.

A few

A few days ago I had occasion to pass near the company's garden. My business had detained me longer than I expected, so that by the time I reached that place, night had come on with more than ordinary darkness; which was rendered still more dismal, by a thicket thro' which I was to pass. In the midst of this solitude I was travelling leisurely forward, and indulging an agreeable melancholy which such scenes seldom fail to inspire; my meditations were soon interrupted by something rushing from the wood; and before I had time to discover the cause, I felt a blow upon my temple which brought me to the ground.

How long I continued in this situation I am unable to say. When my senses returned I found myself seated on the ground, surrounded by several people with lanterns; one of whom tho' himself wounded, seemed particularly solicitous for my recovery. By the care and assistance of these good people I was removed to a neighbouring house, and a surgeon sent for, who pronounced my case, tho' dangerous, not mortal; for, besides the blow which has deprived me of my senses, I discovered a wound in
my

my side; to prevent any alarming apprehensions in my wife, I had recollection enough to dispatch a servant to inform her that business detained me a day longer in the country; and before the conclusion of the next day, I found myself able to return home, tho' not quite well, yet, with fewer symptoms of danger than at first I had reason to expect.

The person I have mentioned never left my bed-side during the remainder of the night; and I found it was to his courage and the strength of his arm that I owed my life. As he approached the centre of the wood, he told me, that he heard a noise, and a voice calling out with some violence "kill him." Being armed with pistols, he proceeded forward to rescue the person that was attacked, and tho' too late to prevent the first blow, yet he arrived in time to frustrate their horrid intentions. One of the assassins was wounded and fell; the other made his escape. By the former we were informed that they had mistaken their object; which to me was no small satisfaction, as I knew not that there was a person in the world whom I had so far injured as that he should wish to take my life. Plunder did not seem
to

to be their motive, but the sole object of their intention was a principle of revenge. A country-man of ours, (I wish I could add that there was not many such,) had risen to great power and riches by the most infamous acts of violence and oppression. A combination of unhappy natives had agreed to take him off the first opportunity. These two were deputed for that purpose; but either from false information or the darkness of the night, the innocent, for such I will venture to call myself, suffered the punishment of the guilty.

This, however, was only a prelude to an agreeable discovery. Towards the morning the stranger left me, that he might himself take a little repose. In the mean time I rose and dressed, and as he entered the room again, at the same instant that I exclaimed "Mandeville!" he, with no less wonder and surprize, repeated "Scudamore!" In short, we found in each other the person of a school-fellow. I cannot describe the pleasure this discovery produced in us both. My feelings almost overcame me when I beheld my friend in the person of my deliverer. Nor was he less sensibly affected, when he found that the

man

man his humanity had saved, had been the companion of his younger years, the partner of his youthful cares and amusements. After our mutual astonishment had subsided a little, it was natural that we should wish to be acquainted with each other's history, and particularly with those circumstances which had brought us together in so distant a quarter of the globe. It did not take up much time to relate the events of my life. There was nothing remarkable in them, and therefore my narrative soon gave place to one from which I expected greater variety.

The History of Mandeville.

"The life of man, (began my friends) presents us a chequered scene. Sometimes all is gay, and we proceed rapidly forward without thought and without reflections. Sometimes a dark cloud overshadows our prospects, and then we are sunk into ten-fold darkness. This may appear a very pompous introduction to a simple story, but believe me I have had the greatest reason to extract wisdom from the various circumstances of my life; and if I have not yet found it, it must

must be attributed more to my own insensibility, than the opportunities of instruction which have been afforded me. "Sweet are the uses of adversity," says the poet of nature, therefore I am not without hopes that the time will come, when I shall reflect, even with some degree of pleasure, that I have been once miserable.

"When you first knew me, you may remember that I was the apparent heir of a very handsome fortune; that my company was courted by many of my school-fellows; and even that our old and worthy master regarded me with some degree of attention. I was not insensible to these circumstances, which is evident from my recalling them at this time to your memory. Then indeed I was happy; but it was the happiness of one who knew not that misery existed in the world. Here our friendship, Mr. Scudamore, commenced; for here I remember that we singled each other out, as a partner at play, or as an assistant in our tasks. About the time that I was to have been admitted at the University, my father died, and this opened, perhaps the most distressful scene that human nature can conceive. He left my mother,

ther, who had been educated in all the elegancies of life, and six children, myself the eldest, without a farthing in the world. His fine estate, the care and protection of a long race of ancestors, was sold for the payment of his debts; and nothing was reserved but a cottage in a distant county, (the bounty indeed, it was, of a humane creditor) where my mother, with such parsimony as she was able, might bring up such of her children as were yet infants.

“ In this case, what was my resource? I had no money to put me into business, and I am sorry to add, not many friends, for all my father’s friends, were friends *only* to his *fortunes*. One exception indeed I should make, the minister of the parish, tho’ poor, was hospitable. He had received his little living from my father’s hands, and in this hour of my necessity, he forgot not that I was his son. Indeed he was a true christian; and those gleams of happiness which I have since occasionally met with, I owe entirely to his instructions. He took the opportunity of my sorrows to instil principles of true religion. He told me upon what motives I must bear my misfortunes, to what end they were given, and

and whose improvement was intended by them. In short, his lessons were useful without being impertinent; they were pious without any degree of austerity.

“In the parsonage of this good man I continued some months, without coming to any determination for my future life. At length I was informed that a noble lord wanted a private secretary, a young man of liberal education, and a tractable disposition. My good old friend flattered me with saying that I should fill this place with credit, and had no doubt but I should soon rise to riches and honour. In a short time I prepared to take possession of my splendid expectations. My worthy friend parted with me with no small emotion. He followed me to the door, and bestowed his last benediction on me. The tears trickled down his cheeks; and his last words were “remember that you are a christian, and hold fast your integrity.” My own tears flowed so fast that I could hardly take a farewell look of the good old man, and his humble dwelling, buried in woodbine and holly.

“My journey to the metropolis was soon accomplished, and I was soon placed

placed in a mansion where there was more splendour than happiness, more confusion than entertainment. I entered immediately upon my new employment, and was not sorry to find that my scene of action was an elegant library, furnished with a large collection of well decorated books. "Here, Mandeville, said my noble patron, is the place where you will be principally employed. Here, I spend all my mornings amidst ancient Philosophers, and those amiable moderns who have dared to combat prejudice by a freedom of thought. Here I will dictate to you my letters of correspondence, and instruct you in those principles which are the greatest ornaments of human reason." He would probably have proceeded further, but we were interrupted by a tall thin figure, in a coat buttoned close around him, which had once been black; his face was lengthened, his nose hooked, and his eyes sharp and penetrating, at the same time expressive of a supercilious contempt. In short, after a few minutes conversation between this spare Philosopher and my Lord, I discovered that he was one of those illustrious moderns, who, with the most amiable liberty of thought,

thought, combated the long established opinions of mankind, and endeavoured, upon the ruins of every virtuous principle, to erect his own system of infidelity."

"How shocked was I to find that these were my patron's sentiments, and that, like other *free* philosophers, it was his greatest pleasure to make new converts to his doctrines. At this moment I recollected the admonitions of my venerable friend, when I left the happy parsonage: and resolved, before I suffered one sceptical idea to take root in my mind, to examine the foundation of every thing I had been taught to believe. The splendid library of the noble lord afforded few instances to this purpose, Hume, Bolingbroke, with a long train of well-bound Philosophers, filled the shelves; except that now and then I met with an old *classical* friend to relieve me from absolute despair. As my time, however, was not altogether occupied by my attendance on his Lordship, I found sufficient opportunity to pursue my studies. The evening of every day his Lordship spent from home. I should have informed you that our household did not consist of many persons, besides
the

the servants. His wife had been dead several years, and left him no heirs to his possessions, except a very amiable as well as beautiful daughter, at this time entering her nineteenth year. The household was directed by a maiden sister of his lordship, as respectable for her disposition as she was for her rank and years. My Lord, however, tho' a *good* Philosopher, was neither a good father nor a good brother; and, as you will find in the sequel, by no means, a good master.

“ A fit of the gout confined him to his house, and as the malady was in his hand, it deprived him of the use of his pen. He was therefore obliged to employ me in a correspondence, which informed me that his evening lucubrations were not of the most virtuous nature. This first attempt I submitted to with a sort of smothered indignation; but when he requested me to conduct his lady privately to his house, I revolted at the proposition, and happening at that moment to cast a slight reflection on his philosophical principles, his anger rose to the most uncontrolled pitch, and I soon found that I had lost his patronage and protection.

“ I should now have been contented to depart, but for a thought (and it had never been more than a thought) that I should leave behind the amiable and accomplished Lady Catharine. I had not presumed to look so high for an object of my affections. I durst not indulge the most distant reflection on the subject; and I believe I would sooner have died than have declared the cause of my distress. I was not, however, ignorant, that I had some small interest in the breast of this young lady. There are a thousand ways of deceiving one's own heart. We had often read elegant authors together, and our ways of thinking seemed, without our being sensible of it, always to coincide. I frequently read amusing books to the old lady in an evening, and would sometimes have found my attention rivetted by the refined observations of her niece. These were pleasures, Mr. Scudamore, difficult to be parted with; yet these I had resolved to leave. Tho' my patron had exacted a cruel service, I could not repay his former kindnesses with ingratitude. I was poor indeed, but I resolved to be honest.

“ After

“ After one of our usual evening parties, I accidentally dropped a hint of my intention to quit my present situation, and I believe, I might add, that I should leave all happiness behind me. Imagine my surprize, when my amiable young lady changed colour, and fainted instantly in my arms. The old lady and myself were greatly alarmed by this sudden indisposition. She was, however, soon recovered; some remote cause was sought for as an excuse for her illness; and we retired to our several apartments. What was my agitation on returning to my chamber! The discovery was wonderful; and I threw myself on the bed in an agony of perplexity. I resolved at once to leave the house; but then, to leave the object of my tenderest passion! Various were the tumults of my soul. After three hours of the utmost anxiety I became more calm, and at length determined to abide by my first resolution. My small portion of moveables I collected together, and then, as my last sacrifice, (the only step upon cool reflection I have repented of) disclosed my whole soul to her whom I had not dared to think of but with the most distant admiration. This I did for the sake of explaining

plaining my sudden disappearance; but at the same time assured her, that in all probability this was the last time she would ever hear of me.

“ About day-break in the morning I left my chamber; it was not uncommon for me to take an early walk, and therefore my intention was not suspected by the servants. The month was May, and my steps were involuntarily led towards the fields. I wandered from one village to another, torpid, as it were with grief, not knowing, or at least, not caring where I went. Fatigue at length got the better of my sorrow; I sunk upon the ground at the entrance of a wood, and remained, as I imagine, for some time in a state of insensibility. On coming to myself I found a wood-man standing by me; he had a bill in his hand, and a bundle of fagots on his shoulder; he was returning home after his daily labour. Compassion had seized the poor creature, and he was actually weeping over my seeming torments. I immediately hailed this token of humanity, and as I greatly wanted a lodging for the night, questioned him about the place of his abode. His good-nature was equal to his compassion; I accompanied him to his cottage, and accepted a portion

tion of the scanty meal the wife had prepared for her husband. I retired to an upper chamber, but not to rest! Here I had time for reflection. A few hours had removed me from a palace, to a very humble cottage; from an affluent, tho' dependent situation, to all the appearance of poverty, and all the expectation of distress. Yet with all this I had not let go my integrity. This thought by degrees quieted the perturbations of my mind; and hope seemed to smile upon me. As the rising sun began to tinge the tops of the highest oaks, slumber seemed willing to assist me. This refreshed my body, and the train of reflections that I had fallen into before I slept, caused me to awake in the most agreeable tranquillity. I continued in this cottage above a week, undetermined what paths I should pursue. In the day time I wandered thro' the woods, attending to the songs of the feathered tribe, occasionally interrupted by the strokes of the woodman's axe; in the evenings I watched the rising of the moon and, retired well contented to my coarse, but hospitable entertainment.

"At length, however, I resolved to leave my retirement. My host and hostess were sorry to part with their visitor;

and I yet possessed more than sufficient to purchase their gratitude, if more noble motives had failed. My first lodging in town was near the Royal Exchange; as I carefully shunned those places where it was possible I might have been known. Every day I visited this great resort of the merchants of all nations. I remarked the countenances, and made reflections on the outward appearances of those I saw there. The greater part were too much engaged to regard me, as I had neither a ship to put in commission, or a bargain that was worth attending to.

“A stranger in the midst of thousands, I knew not what course to pursue. My education prevented me from applying myself to menial services; and none were ready to employ a person in a more reputable station, who could not give a better account of himself. I will not trouble you with the many mortifications I received, nor the distress to which I was driven. My money was exhausted, and I had no friends; once I was in prison, but delivered, as my debt was very small, by the humanity of a stranger. My last employment in England was as a writer to the booksellers. For this purpose

pose I changed my lodgings to Pater-noster-Row. Sometimes I wrote political pamphlets, and sometimes sermons; sometimes I translated from the French, and sometimes compiled from the classics. As my employment was innocent, (for I never prostituted my pen to unworthy purposes) I was contented.

“One day passing thro’ the India-house I met a gentleman whom I remembered well at my father’s table; he did not see me but passed along. The porter of the house informed me he was a director. As my road sometimes lay this way I met him again, and caught his eye. After a civil salutation from him, he asked me several questions about my family, and particularly about my present situation. My story I told him was long, and that my situation was far from comfortable. He took no notice, but desired me at the distance of a week to call at his house; and believe me, Scudamore, this generous friend, without any sollicitation, presented me at my first entrance into his apartment, with a very lucrative appointment in India. Need I add more! you see me here; and providence has been so kind as to permit me to save your life.

L 4

“Since

" Since I arrived here every thing prospered with me; my fortune is now even larger than my wishes. I have remitted enough to place my mother in an eligible situation; and educate the rest of my family. This is the true use of riches! As for Lady Catharine, often do I sigh when I remember her, and many a tear do I drop upon her picture. But come, Scudamore, I long to be introduced to your wife. You are now, I hope, able to travel; and we should not prolong any uneasiness that your absence may have occasioned."

Thus Mandeville concluded his narrative with an irresistible grace. He seems to be a credit to the fortune he has acquired; and wants nothing but his amiable Lady Catharine to make him completely happy.

Yours, &c.

Lionel Scudamore.

L E T.

LETTER XXXVI.

Lord Westbury to the Rev. Edward
Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, June 21.

OUR hopes of Mr. Drummond's recovery has been so fluctuating for some days past, that I deferred writing to you, my dear Sir, till I could at least give you a decisive account; a bad one you were prepared for, and I was certain you would readily bear a little anxiety to have it dissipated by good news at last, I have now the pleasure to inform you, that we have every reason to expect a happy termination to our distress. The surgeons have at length been so successful as to extract the ball; and they now tell us that time will restore our friend, who tho' as weak as possible is sensible and without fever; and that there is no doubt but that a continuance of quietness and attention will not only reinstate him in health, but tranquillity. This

L 5

subject

subject occupies both my pen and thoughts, and leaves me no time to thank you as I ought for your very obliging and friendly letter; but your candour will I am sure, excuse at this time any neglect, but that of our dear Henry, who has just sent to desire to see me.

• Your obedient servant,

Westbury.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Lady Julia Harcourt to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, June 23.

WHAT real pleasure it is, to have a friend, like my Eliza, to whom I can with real confidence unbosom my grief, and impart my joy. Drummond is recovering! I wish I could make you sensible of the exquisite satisfaction those three words have the power of conveying to the breast of your Julia. He will live and be happy, and I shall not have the continual pain of reflecting, that it was perhaps my levity and indiscretion, that brought one of the most amiable of his sex to an untimely grave! that plunged his parents into the deepest misery; or banished for ever from his country a person, whom my father had received into his house under the title of friend. Thank Heaven! I am now relieved from these dreadful ideas;
and

and I hope I shall be ever grateful for so great a blessing. Ever since my father returned from Lord Mordington's last night, and informed us that Drummond was now thought entirely out of danger, I have felt so happy, so tranquil, and contented, that it appears as if I had shaken off every thing that was mortal about me, and was quite transformed into an aerial being.

But I am afraid this agreeable enchantment will not long continue, for I have just now received a visit from Lord Westbury, which will, in the end, I doubt, be productive of some uneasiness; and will, after all, convince me that I am still an inhabitant of this nether world. My mother and Selina, according to my mother's usual custom, went this morning a round of visits amongst the cottagers; my father was following his usual occupations of planting and improving his estate; and poor I remained alone in my dressing room; that room which for so many weeks past has been the continual scene of mirth and festivity. The stillness of every object around me, joined to the recollection of the changes that had happened in so short a time in our little society, naturally

naturally threw me into a train of reflection, which would I believe have continued for some time, had not my reverie been interrupted by the entrance of Lord Westbury. After the usual compliments were passed, and he had given me a satisfactory account of the health of his cousin, he took a seat by me. He can never be ungraceful, and yet I thought I perceived something embarrassed in his manner which I had never before observed. "I am come, Lady Julia, said he, after a short pause, upon one of the most unpleasant embassies I was ever before engaged in; I am requested by my father to wait upon you, and beg your acceptance of my hand and fortune." I rose from my seat with great deliberation, and making one of my very best curtsies, "I return you a great many thanks, my Lord, for your civility; and so one of the most unpleasant embassies you were ever engaged in, is to beg my acceptance of your hand and fortune; very gallant indeed!" He smiled and took my hand, "I have at least one satisfaction, Lady Julia, in finding you still retain your vivacity; from the paleness and dejection of your looks at my first entrance,

I was

I was apprehensive your charming spirits had quite forsaken you." I was vexed at the insinuation; "don't be alarmed, my Lord, said I, on that account, I flatter myself I have still spirits enough left to make a figure as your wife; quite as much as you will think agreeable, or I am much mistaken." "I will not lie under the imputation of having said an uncivil thing to you, my amiable friend, said he, I think any man might esteem himself particularly fortunate, who could be so happy as to gain the affections of Lady Julia Harcourt, who had a heart to offer in return; I believe you are not ignorant of my unalterable attachment to your friend, Miss Courtney; my love for her is so interwoven with my existence, that I firmly believe it can end but with my life; with such feelings, how can I with any tolerable composure, even to oblige a parent, offer my hand to any other woman?"

"Now, my Lord, I can with sincerity thank you for your ingenuousness; I did indeed know your attachment to Selina before, but it gives me an additional pleasure to find that you really esteem me worthy the title of your friend,

friend, by allowing me a place in your confidence. Let us now consult what is best to be done in this affair, for our mutual happiness. Shall I openly decline the offer of your hand? or what other method can we fix upon that is most likely to appease Lord Mordington." "My charming, my amiable Julia, exclaimed he, how shall I express my admiration of your conduct; you are willing to draw down the displeasure of all parties upon yourself, to promote the happiness of your friends. But I am afraid, after all, nothing we can do will be of any service to appease, as you say, my father; he is violent in his dislike to Selina, I know not for what reason. I have considered and re-considered the subject, and could think of no other method to make him alter his opinion, but by a private marriage; *that* your friend has from a motive of delicacy, absolutely refused, and yet I am not without hope, that time and importunity may tempt her to become more favourable to my wishes. I am confident, would she give me leave to introduce her to Lord Mordington, as his daughter, he would in a short time be as proud of her under
that

that title, as he is now solicitous she should never become so."

Before I had time to reply, my father entered the room; he seemed so mightily pleased with the party he met with, that I was quite convinced this had been a preconcerted scheme between the two old gentlemen the night before. Lord Westbury sat a short time, and then took his leave, firmly believing I am persuaded that I would intreat Selina to run away with him. I cannot say I concur with him in opinion of that being the most likely way to reconcile Lord Mordington. But love has the power of blinding the most sensible of his votaries. In any other case I don't think those would be the sentiments of Lord Westbury. I have not time to add more, than with how much sincerity I am, my dear Eliza's ever affectionate

Julia Harcourt.

L E T-

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mrs. Scudamore, to Miss Darnley.

Madras, April 10.

IN the course of three weeks, my dearest Eliza, we shall leave India ; in three or four months (long tedious months they will seem to me) I trust I shall once more revisit England, and the beloved friends it contains. Safe arrived there with my husband, that spot will be the centre of all my desires ; and the pleasure I anticipate on that occasion adds to my impatience to undertake the voyage, which I now do with eagerness and without fear ; and my spirits are so good, that I flatter myself I shall not experience that uneasiness usual in a long voyage.

Every thing now looks with so smiling a face, that I forget all my distress ; for distress, Eliza, I have lately experienced in a severe degree. Lionel has
been

been ill, dangerously ill, in a violent fever, occasioned by a blow he received; and I had every reason to dread, that widowed and forlorn I should have to return to a country which without his presence would have lost all its charms. But I thank heaven, his health is restored, and he is now busy in preparing for our departure, with alacrity and pleasure, not inferior to what I feel. I am perfectly sensible that living here in the style we have done has been as disagreeable to him as to me; and that the desire of acquiring a fortune sufficient to place me in affluence, has been the sole reason of sacrificing so many of his best years. Ah, little did he know how soon my wishes were gratified, and that a small, a very small fortune, was adequate to every convenience and every luxury I could require: but as this time is almost elapsed I will not now lament it. However we had passed it, it would now have been over; and the recollection of it alone would have remained. We are now furnished with the means of benevolence and the power of being useful to our fellow-creatures; may we prove just stewards of the talents committed to our care,
and

and may we not follow the example of those selfish mortals who live for themselves alone!

It surely is not the business of a rational being, or answering the end of our creation, to be continually wandering about in search of amusement; the poor and the miserable have a claim upon us for much, perhaps even *all* that we spend in folly and dissipation; but I believe it is possible to comply moderately with the customs of that world in which we live, without being hurried away by the torrent. Mr. Scudamore and myself have laid down a plan in theory we mean soon to put in practice, you can inform us whether it is chimerical or no? but the idea is pleasing; and therefore we do not relinquish it till we have given it a fair trial. We mean to purchase an estate at a considerable distance from the metropolis, and where its baneful influence has not yet reached, *if such a place can be found*; there, in the midst of our tenants and dependants we will strive to be the means of good to all. Not by a mistaken liberality or indulgence, but by instructing them in agriculture, œconomy, and the way, not to wealth, but
to

to independence; which is only to be gained by industry and purity of manners. You will tell us that we have ourselves some of those arts yet to learn! very true, but can we spend our time better than in studying those sciences which will be useful to *us* also, and which contain, even in the most trivial sense a "fund of entertainment!" By setting them an example of religion and virtue, we hope to prove to them and their children, its utility; and by so doing, lay a foundation which the accidental influence of vice may not be able to overturn. These are our *day-dreams* when separate, and our conversation when together. Neither Mr. Scudamore nor myself are fond of living in the great world; and we hope to find hours thus employed never hang heavy on our hands.

With minds thus occupied are your old friends, my Eliza, returning to you, not less worthy I hope of your affection than they were some years ago; and confident that your heart will have undergone no change, unless indeed you have given it by this time to another guest. At the time of your writing your last letter, which I received a few weeks

weeks ago, no such event had taken place; but when I consider how long it is since that letter was written, I perceive how many changes may have happened ere now. In the midst of my rejoicings on my return, I cannot help dropping a tear to the memory of our excellent friend and instructor, Dr. Morton, and for the distress his widow must feel for his loss, which to her it must always be; but to you I hope it is not irreparable, though much to be lamented. My husband bids me tell you that as you would not return him one line to his gallant epistle, he will be equally proud; nor would he send you the following message but out of pure charity, viz. "to recommend to you to put yourself and fortune into the hands of some amiable man, who being nearly your own age, will in all probability continue to you his counsel, his attentions, and support in all dangers, *ghostly and bodily*, as you may want them; that *we* can contradict your arguments against matrimony any time you please; and convince you (of what perhaps you are already convinced) that it is a state capable of the most refined felicity" Hear this, thou dear infidel,

and

and tremble for having continued so long single.

I should be ungrateful to my newly-found treasure Orixana, could I close this letter without speaking of one to whom I owe so much gratitude. The present Mrs. Dennison made me of this excellent woman has been a real blessing; her attachment to me I dare say knows no bounds; and during Mr. Scudamore's illness, she was to both all we could expect from the oldest friend or nearest relation. She assisted in nursing *him*, she comforted and consoled *me*. All her own afflictions, severe as they have been, were banished; and humanity took entire possession of that breast which might be supposed to have grown callous to every feeling. It is but lately that I have known her tale of sorrows, and I have not time now to commit it to paper for your perusal; but on shipboard, if I am able, I will try to recollect the most striking parts of her simple narrative. It will lose much in not being told by herself, whose pathetic manner makes it so interesting. I have made her happy by convincing her we will never part, and that she shall be the companion of my fortunes;
all

all her prayers have been offered on this account, and I believe she will think every hour a day till we arrive in England; where she expects to meet upon the shore, a long lost husband. Poor Orixana! I will not damp the expectation which this voyage has made so desirable, but I fear disappointment will be the end of thy hopes. Adieu, Eliza! rest assured that nothing can be a greater happiness to me, than to see you.

Emily Scudamore.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

Lord Westbury to the Rev. E. Seymour.

Westbury-Lodge, June 24.

THE health of our friend, my dear Mr. Seymour, becomes every day more and more favourable. He will soon be able to use his pen, and I don't doubt but you will receive its first offering. He now gets up every day, but is yet too weak to share any thing with his friends but joy; and I have none of that to dispose of. A few weeks ago I thought nothing could affect me more sensibly than the state in which I saw poor Drummond; I now find there is one person in the world who occupies a larger portion of my heart than even that valued relation; and the idea of being separated from her, causes a pang still more poignant. You will excuse me for troubling you with my concerns,
but

but the heart ready to burst with its own anguish seeks for some one to unburthen itself to ; and our late correspondence upon a melancholy subject, has convinced me, that you have humanity enough to pity the distress of a friend, to give him your confidence, and to assist him with your advice. I will therefore hasten to give you a detail of the transactions that have been going forward during my attendance on Mr. Drummond.

My father, eager, no doubt, to ensure my happiness, and unconscious of infringing any right, proposed to my Lord St. Clair a union between Lady Julia and myself, without giving me the least hint of his intentions. Could I have offered her a heart, free and disengaged, and have received such a one in return, it might have been to both a connexion not only of convenience, but felicity ; but situated as we are, nothing could be so unfortunate as this proposal ; and my objections to the alliance, have incensed my father so highly, that I fear all my art, without the submission he requires, will be insufficient to re-instate me in his good graces.

VOL. I.

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With a soul not very susceptible of the tender passion, he cannot conceive what dislike we can have to a marriage which appears to him to be so necessary to the improvement of both our fortunes; (which indeed are separately large enough to satisfy reasonable desires, and even now to contribute to the wants of others) but two people are to be made miserable for the sake of joining acre to acre, and the lengthening a grove to the extent of ten miles, when five are enough for every convenience the most wanton fancy can desire.

This would have been my opinion if my heart were free; but attached as it is to Miss Courtney, I look on wealth only as a secondary consideration; nor should I have had a wish for it but as a means of placing her in a situation where her merit and virtues might be most conspicuous.

I have endeavoured to convince my mistaken parent that her worth, her education, and understanding, would adorn the highest rank, and give lustre to it; but he is inflexible, and insists as a proof of my affection for him, that I
see

see her no more, that I forget her, nor think of, nor speak to her again. I have not, nor neither can I promise such a sacrifice, because I am certain it is what I never shall be able to perform! I even fear your superior reason and unbiaſſed judgment will condemn me, when I tell you, I have dared to mention to Selina, as our only reſource, a private marriage; but ſhe for ever ſoars above me, and vows never to be mine without my father's conſent.

“ I have never, ſhe ſays, known the bleſſing of a parent, but I have been taught to reverence the very name, and to look on diſobedience as a mortal crime; let me not then be guilty of leading one I love into danger, or calling down on your head the curſe of him who has a right to *expect* obedience, though not to *force* it. We are both young, my Lord, and according to the courſe of nature may look forward to many years; let us not embitter theſe by follies of which we are ſure to repent; nor cloud over future proſpects with family diſcontents which would deſtroy all our enjoyments. Lord Mor-

dington is growing into years, let me not deprive him of the consolation he has a right to expect from you. I have vowed never to be yours but on terms of general consent ; if it will contribute to your ease and happiness, I will vow also, never to be another's, whilst you continue single and attached to me."

This, my dear Sir, is Selina's fixed resolve. Reason I know must approve of it, but love would have rejoiced at a less rigid decision. Sometimes I am inclined to doubt of the strength of her affection for me, but I know the offers she has refused since our acquaintance, and that she is all truth and sincerity, and in a moment I banish every thing but confidence in her constancy. That mine will be equally firm, equally permanent, I will never cease to assure her, but we must separate ; this is my ambitious father's decree, and in which for a time I must acquiesce. I fear, however, I cannot be quite so submissive as he expects me, for he imagines I may live within three miles of the woman I love above every earthly being, and never see her, or think of her ; indeed, my good Sir, I have not resolution suf-

ficient

ficient to aid me in an action so heroic. I feel myself but a weak mortal, contending with so violent an adversary as love; and I am much more inclined to yield than make any resistance. Were the object less worthy, I might perhaps endeavour to conquer this inclination; *as it is* I will fly, but carry along with me the arrow and the wound, and cherish a sentiment that I am convinced is honourable, for it is the love of virtue herself. You will say that the subject hurries me too far, and that I forget having at the beginning of my letter asked your advice; whereas I seem to be giving my own opinion, and abiding by it, like most people in an error. But though you see I am determined as to my general behaviour, I wish for your advice how to conduct myself properly in this perplexing affair. I begin to distrust my own judgment on an occasion where the passions take the lead.

You will favour me with a continuance of your correspondence I am sure, but if you could for a few days give us the pleasure of your society, it would be contributing to the happiness of an

old as well as a new friend; one who is eager to prove how much he *has* and *does* value your friendship; and the latter how much he *will* if you honour him with it. I remain your most obliged and very affectionate,

Westbury.

L E T.

L E T T E R XL.

Lady Julia Harcourt to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, June 26.

I HAVE often heard it remarked, my dear Eliza, "that a striking contrast in scene or situation, could never be unpleasant," now I do aver the direct contrary, from my own experience this very evening. The serenity of the weather induced Selina and myself to exceed our usual limits in our walk, and ramble to a water mill about two miles distant. It stands at the foot of a hill, or, I should rather say, the hill is of a semicircular form, so as to screen the miller's pleasant cottage from every cold and penetrating wind. The river forces its way rudely over several broken rocks and large stones, and solicits your attention as well from its picturesque beauties, as from its agreeable murmurs. On the opposite bank is a

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large

large hanging wood, that throws a soft and pleasant shade over the whole of this delightful valley. The miller's wife was seated upon a rustic bench at the door of her cottage; her son, a handsome youth, that might have passed for a shepherd in a romance, was reclined upon the bank at a little distance, drawing some delightful strains from a clarinet; whilst his brother, a sweet child about two years old, was gathering flowers beside him.

There was something in this scene so simple and pleasing, that we likewise seated ourselves upon the verdant mead, to contemplate the beauties of the place. Our meditations, however, were soon interrupted by sounds, which to my companion I firmly believe were more sweet than the warbling songsters in the neighbouring grove, or the soft notes from the youth's clarinet, it was the voice of Lord Westbury. For some time we conversed on general topics, the beauties of nature, &c. but in a scene so formed to inspire love, with the object of your tenderest attachment by your side, it would have been unnatural, nay impossible, not to have introduced the favourite subject. "How much

much I wish, Lady Julia, said Westbury, that our society, at this moment, could be encreased by the presence of the man, who of all others has the power of conferring happiness on you." An involuntary tear started in my eye; I was ashamed of my weakness, and dreaded nothing so much as Westbury's observing it. I told him I thought it was a very pretty hint for me to retire, and ran hastily down the bank to the miller's wife. She took me into the cottage, and gave me the history of every individual of her little family. Every thing was so neat and comfortable, that I protest, Eliza, I thought that I could with pleasure have renounced all the trappings of grandeur; and with a few chosen friends, could have contentedly finished my peaceful days in that reclusive situation. We stayed till the evening shades began to close around us; I then thought it high time to remind the *worthy pair*, that they were not in fairy land, but must again return to the common path of mortals. We sauntered home in that happy frame of mind, which I am convinced, my friend, you have much oftner experienced than I have. How ardently I

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wish

wish I could attain that firm equality of soul which you enjoy, and which must be such a real blessing to the possessor.

When we arrived at the avenue, Lord Westbury told us, that his father's early supper, and a point he made of never keeping him waiting, must be his apology for not seeing us quite home. The motive of obliging a parent was too amiable not to approve of it; we therefore went quietly home without him. But how much were we surprised on entering the drawing-room, to find Lord Mordington there.

How shall I give you a description of the party? my mother looked extremely uneasy, and every time they spoke seemed to add to her anxiety; my father appeared to be much more angry than he is accustomed to be; as for Lord Mordington, passion, pride, petulance, malice; and ill-nature, were all blended in his countenance. As soon as he beheld me, "There she is," said he, "let her answer for herself. Tell me, young lady, have you, durst you say, that you would not marry my son? and yet if it is so, don't tell me; I could not with patience see the woman,

man, who was so lost to every thing that was good, as to say she did not choose to marry Lord Westbury. But I know your motives, your reasons are plain enough ; don't think I want penetration so much as not to know it is your love for Harry Drummond." " Her love for Harry Drummond!" said my father, interrupting him, " if I had the least suspicion that she dared but for an instant—" " Who cares for your suspicions, my Lord St. Clair, you are so passionate, so impetuous, if you would be calm and collected, as I am, you would see things in their true light. But don't alarm yourself, Drummond will never have her ; poor fellow, he has engaged himself, like a graceless dog as he is, to marry a French girl ; and as soon as he gets better, he is going to see her. It distresses his parents much, but who is there that ever had a child that did not distress them?" This last speech of Lord Mordington's was more than my father's temper could bear ; that his daughter should be in love with a man who had evidently left her for another woman, and this attachment should prevent her accepting the man he had destined for her, was too

too much. I confess I was not less offended than my father. My bosom glowed with an honest indignation at the thought; and stupified as I was at the reception I had met with at my entrance, I yet found words to exculpate myself from the charge. "There is but one way, Julia, to convince me," said my father, "and that is instantly to tell Lord Mordington, you will with pleasure accept the addresses of his son."

This was a hard condition! I hesitated, "If you don't comply," continued my father, "I will disown you for my child; nor will I suffer any one to plead in your behalf." He came up to me with a firmness in his look that absolutely frightened me; I burst into tears! this had more effect than all the oratory I could have used. "She is my only child," said he, "it has been the study of her life, hitherto, to make me happy. She is the comfort of my age; and shall I, to gratify myself, make her life miserable? I cannot do it, my Lord Mordington; you must tell your son, without Julia will marry him with her own free will, he shall not have her at all." "You are

are a foolish man; my Lord St. Clair, to be softened by a woman's tears; they will do her no harm: But let her cry, she is stubborn enough, I believe, my son is better without her; but one thing more I insist upon, he shall not have your other daughter as you call her; she is certainly an improper match for him." "No reflections upon Selina, my Lord," said my father, "she is a good girl, and I dare answer, has no thoughts of your son." "So much the better, so much the better," said his Lordship, "for she never *shall* have him." Poor Selina's case was not now much better than mine; she blushed extremely when my father asserted she had no thoughts of Westbury; but we were all relieved by Lord Mordington's taking his leave. You will believe, Eliza, I was truly grateful to my father for his goodness to me. When we retired, I found myself so little inclined to sleep, that I sat down to impart this whole scene to you; I know you will feel for our perplexities. Adieu, my dear friend, no situation can ever alter the warm affection that is felt for you, by your

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

LETTER XLI.

Rev. *Edward Seymour* to *Henry Drummond, Esq.*

Wansford-House, June 27.

My Dear Friend,

AS I am now relieved by your recovery, from the anxiety which attended your late situation, I feel an impulse to assume a more serious air; and admonish you, both in the character of a friend and a divine. Believe me, that this late transaction, which so deeply hurt my feelings as your friend, wounded me much more acutely as a man of religion. I cannot look upon the decision of these points of honour, as they are called, in any other light than that of a cool deliberate murder. Tell me not that the world approves such inhuman customs, to keep the peace of society, to awe the petulant, and silence the impertinent. But does religion
sleep

sleep while these reformers are murdering men into obedience? Does the maker of mankind, who formed men to be of one mind, and told them that they were brethren, does He sit an unconcerned spectator of such transactions? does the author of the most benevolent religion the world ever saw authorize such proceedings? Alas! the very contrary is the case! Even harsh words are forbidden by that mild legislator; how much more, inhuman actions? But am I then, the man of spirit exclaims, tamely to endure an insult? am I to bow before the insolent, and crave pardon, when I have never offended? by no means, innocence will always justify herself; and men of understanding will support her conduct. The challenger is generally rash, and always prejudiced by passion. Is it reasonable, then, to say nothing of religious motives, that I am to run the hazard of losing my life, because he cares not for his own? is it proper that I, who, probably, am a husband or a father, should stake these unfinished duties against the life of a profligate? or, if I am not yet engaged in these important characters of life, others, probably, demand

demand my care. It may be, an aged parent's breath depends upon my own; a sister's happiness, or a brother's love; am I then to risk all in this world, and my own welfare in the next, for what? for a point of mistaken honour; and to gratify the resentment of a rash mortal. Think not that the world would condemn you for declining such a contest. Men of sense and virtue would rather applaud you; and if a few licentious characters should not be satisfied with these reasons, be assured that they do not understand them, therefore despise their insults.

I have not, neither do I intend, to apply these arguments to your late rencontre. Your own reflections, I doubt not, before this time, have done it for you. To speak my friendship is beyond my power. Live as you have hitherto done; and if once only in a man's life he has done amiss, he need not be afraid of censure.

Yours, affectionately,

Edward Seymour.

L E T.

L E T T E R XLII.

Miss Darnley to Lady Julia Harcourt.

Wansford House, June 28.

I CONGRATULATE you, my dearest Julia, on Mr. Drummond's recovery. It has relieved you from infinite anxiety, as you considered yourself the cause, (though certainly the innocent one) of the unfortunate rencontre. I cannot acquit Mr. Drummond of acting with duplicity; and perhaps it is a fortunate event for you that his first engagement was so soon discovered. I hope he will leave Lord Mordington's as soon as his health will permit, as I should be sorry you should meet him at present. He is Mr. Seymour's most intimate friend, and many conversations we have had on this subject. Seymour blames himself much
for

for not endeavouring to guard his friend from such a fatal delusion; his reflections have been as painful as your own, and the favourable accounts we now receive, have relieved him from infinite anxiety.

I hinted to Selina, in a letter, an idea I had of changing my situation; you should have heard of it sooner, but for this melancholy quarrel which has engrossed so many of our thoughts. You have often told me, Julia, that I should be much happier in a married state than I was in a single one, but my heart had no object to prefer; and I looked only at a distance at a prospect which perhaps does not always appear in the most brilliant colours. But Seymour's gentle virtues, and many amiable qualities, have been more effectual than all your rhetoric. I feel all the soft influence of that passion which has been so often the subject of the poet's pen, but which, till now, I never could form an idea of.

I have not rashly entered into this engagement. From the first moment I became acquainted with Mr. Seymour,

mour, my heart told me he was the only man I had ever seen who could make me happy. I took some pains to banish him from my thoughts; and I must confess that my pride was hurt, when I reflected how steadily I had declared my intention of never marrying. I was unwilling to own my weakness, even to you, my friend; and ashamed when I considered how very inconsistent my conduct would appear should I indulge the partiality I felt. Mr. Seymour's behaviour to me since I first knew him, has been uniform, manly, and I may add, tender; it required very little penetration to discover the preference he gave me; and his motives for concealing that preference were so very generous, that his character stands unrivalled. You must pardon the strength of my expression, as you may perceive that I view all his actions through a medium which is not very apt to magnify faults. It is true, I love him with a sincere affection, and as my heart never before felt the force of this passion, I may be a little blind, but all who know

know him praise his virtues ; they are not of the negative kind, but active, and exerted for the good of his fellow creatures. I have a very particular wish, my beloved friend, that you should be with me on this occasion ; for though I am so truly sensible of Mr. Seymour's merit, and am in my own mind perfectly satisfied with the propriety of the step, yet I feel my spirits will require the kind assistance of my Julia, to help me to support myself with firmness. Will my dear Lady St. Clair have the goodness to spare you and Selina to me, though but for a short time. Plead for me, my friend, to your mother, you have more interest in her heart than I can boast of, and I doubt not your readiness to oblige me.

Mr. Seymour begs his most respectful compliments, and bids me say he will either come to Livingston for you, or meet you in any part of the road, if Lord and Lady St. Clair will but grant us this favour ; and I will promise myself to see you safe home again. I could urge numberless arguments

guments to show how kind I should esteem your presence at this time; but to your friendship alone I will appeal. I flatter myself with a first place, and in that hope I shall remain your most affectionate and sincere friend,

Eliza Darnley.

L E T.

L E T T E R XLIII.

*Rev. Edward Seymour to Lord Westbury.**Wansford, July 1.*

SINCERELY do I thank your Lordship for your two last favours. The restoration of my friend's health has given me a sensible pleasure; and I have nothing now to wish on his account, but that he may properly feel the impropriety of his conduct, and profit by his late melancholy situation. I have written to him on this subject, and flatter myself, I shall ere long have the happiness of hearing from him.

Your Lordship's offers of friendship are too agreeable not to be accepted with joy; and I should esteem myself very fortunate to be able in any respect to give you advice which might contribute either to your present or future happiness. Miss Courtney's behaviour meets with my warmest approbation; and give me leave to add, my Lord, it is rather
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an ungenerous conclusion, to imagine that she is not as sincerely attached to your Lordship as you expected. Tho' the votaries of love, perhaps, may not be so clear-sighted as if they were not under that influence, yet we ought not to conclude, that a person who acts with propriety, in such a situation, does not *feel*; it would be striking at the root of every heroic action, and depriving your lively friend of one of her brightest ornaments. Your Lordship will, I am sure, be sensible of this when time has soothed those sorrows which at present wound your heart.

The different ideas of happiness which persons of different ages entertain, may easily account for Lord Mordington's earnest wish to see you united to Lady Julia Harcourt. You must be perfectly satisfied, that it is your felicity alone his Lordship has in view; and tho' he has unfortunately chosen an improper method of expressing his desire, yet, I dare venture to promise, he will in time be convinced of his error, and have real pleasure in allowing you to be happy in your own way. Only, my Lord, you must follow Miss Courtney's advice. Do not by precipitation blast all your future prospects;

prospects; with your sentiments of filial respect, you could never be happy even in the possession of her you most ardently desire; if, by obtaining the object of your wishes, you forfeit the affection of a father.

Your past life has been spent in such unremitting attention to your duty, and your character has gained so much lustre by it, that I flatter myself the moment your Lordship will view with the calm eye of mild philosophy, your present situation, that you never can marry Miss Courtney under these circumstances. I would suggest to you, by way of changing the scene, by all means to go abroad; if you can prevail with his Lordship to give his approbation. Besides, the necessity there appears to be for poor Drummond to take that step, as soon as his health will permit, will be an excellent pretence for your accompanying him.

It would have added greatly to my present happiness if it had been in my power to have accepted your obliging invitation, as I should have wished to have seen you both before you leave England; but you each feel the power of love too forcibly, to expect me to leave
at

at this time the object of my tenderest attachment. Miss Darnley has consented to make me happy, and I hope in a short time to assume a new character. We have some flattering expectations that Lady Julia Harcourt and Miss Courtney will honour our nuptials with their presence, which prevents me from requesting the favour of seeing you at that time at Wansford. When your Lordship returns from the Continent, it will be no small addition to my happiness to have the honour of receiving you in my humble habitation.

E. Seymour.

LETTER XLIV.

Lady Julia Harcourt to Miss Darnley.

Livingston-Abbey, July 3.

YOUR letters, my dear Eliza, have always the power of conveying a sensible satisfaction to my breast; but your last was productive of more than common pleasure. It has long been my ardent wish to see you shine in the connubial state; with so fair a prospect of happiness before you, how thankful am I that my prayers have been heard. Your sentiments of a single life seemed to be so firmly rooted, that I was really afraid it would not have been easy to eradicate them; but I am rejoiced to find I was mistaken. I cannot even now avoid reverting to my former ideas of *old maidism*, that it is a forlorn uncomfortable state at best.* Even you, my friend, I have

* A late writer compares it to a blighted tree upon an open common.

have often thought were in want of some intimate connexion, tho' surrounded with fortune's best gifts. Whilst young, we can find friends enough who are ready to sail with us down the giddy stream of dissipation; but when age and infirmities oblige us to retire, and to endeavour to find that happiness at home which we vainly sought abroad, how much do we then want a companion who is bound to us by a firmer tie than that of friendship. Our female friends have formed other connexions, and are too busily employed in watching the progress of their own families, to attend to the happiness of a solitary individual.

And as to the Platonic system, I had always a very indifferent opinion of that. I recollect, Eliza, you once dropped a hint to me in one of your letters, that you wished Mr. Seymour, had been either married, or a good deal older, that you might without censure have cherished a friendship for him; of the absurdity of that idea I apprehend you have been too long convinced, to make it necessary, at this time, for me to enlarge upon it.

If you will let me know when you have fixed your day, I will certainly be with you the evening before, and stay for one week. I am much obliged to Mr. Seymour for his politeness in offering to meet me on the road; but I think it will be unnecessary to give him that trouble, as I shall take the travelling chariot and carry my own maid with me. Selina is very much mortified, she cannot be with you, but she has had a little cold, which joined to a hurry of spirits at being present at some unpleasant scenes lately, some of which I described, and others of the same nature, threw her into a slow fever. She was indeed very much indisposed for some days, but I hope she is now nearly recovered; tho' my mother does not choose to trust her from home so soon after her confinement.

Poor Westbury's distress at the time she was sick, is not to be described; how tenderly is he attached to her! I cannot help daily lamenting, that two people, so formed to confer happiness on each other, should thus be forever separated, by the ill nature and caprice of a petulant old man. I beg his Lordship's
pardon,

pardon, but I am entirely out of patience with him.

"I fear, my Selina," said Westbury to her, this morning, "that I give you pain by my very great anxiety for your recovery; you absolutely seem to suffer as if you were distressed, when I am in company with you, by the energy I cannot refrain from shewing for your welfare: But it shall not be always thus; I will not be the constant cause of uneasiness to the woman, whom of all others, I wish to make the most happy. As soon as I am convinced you are quite well, I will instantly go abroad." "Abroad, my Lord," said Selina, lifting up her fine eyes to his, "surely you have no thoughts of that." "Indeed I have," said he, "nay, I am seriously determined upon it; do you think I can see and converse with you constantly, daily behold so many proofs of your numberless qualifications, and still remain under the cruel restrictions you and my father have laid on me of never calling you mine? and, on the other hand, is it possible that I should remain in the same kingdom with you, and yet debar myself the pleasure of beholding you? No, my charming girl,

girl, believe me, that it is a task too hard for me to impose upon myself."

"If such is your determination," said Selina, "let me intreat you to alter it. I shall be most unhappy in considering myself as the cause of your banishment. Your country has a claim upon you. If such members of the community as Lord Westbury will not reside at home, where shall we look for examples. Your father has a right to demand your society! let me now, my Lord, have the satisfaction of hearing you say, you will not, at least for some time, go abroad." He bowed his head, but made her no answer. So much for the obstinacy of *mankind* thought I; give them but time to form an opinion, right or wrong, and all the persuasion in the world cannot overturn it.

Poor Selina! I doubt she will long be the victim of a hopeless passion! Left you should imagine more of the inhabitants of Livingston-Abbey may be in the same situation, I think it necessary to inform you, that I am entirely restored to my reason, and behold Drummond's actions in the true light; and upon cool reflection cannot help thinking them ungenerous

nerous to the last degree. It was all at the beginning, friendship and flirtation; so far it was very well; but did he not sometimes endeavour to introduce a little love, particularly in a little *Jeu d'Esprit*, he sent me with a dart; and if it was all friendship, why was the name of *Mademoiselle de Sanzey* so carefully avoided. I am not quite sure that I hold Selwyn's behaviour in such abhorrence as I did when he went away. Had he behaved better about the duel, I could easily have forgiven him for being the first person that mentioned the French lady.

It appears to me now very plain, that Drummond had fixed upon this plan for the amusement of a few leisure hours, whilst he was obliged to stay in England, till he could once more return to his beloved *Rosalie*. A very flattering consideration for me to be sure! I have one more idea to suggest to you, and then I have done with the subject for ever. Don't you think that Lord Westbury might have hinted to me that there was such a lady in existence, without *violently* infringing either the laws of *friendship* or *honour*? I am no great judge of these nice points between men, but I think

that might have been done with a very little management.

We are informed that Mr. Selwyn is at Paris, living in high style; that he is quite the *ton*, and an universal favourite with the ladies. He certainly can be an agreeable companion when he *pleases*. Mr. Drummond goes away in the morning, so I hope I shall be spared the pain of seeing him any more.

Adieu, my dear friend! I fear I have taken up too much of your time at present, when you have more important concerns to think of. I shall not write again before I see you; that it may be in happy times, and on an happy occasion, is the sincere prayer of your

Julia Harcourt.

L E T.

LETTER XLV.

*Henry Drummond, Esq. to the Rev.
E. Seymour.*

Westbury-Lodge, July 3;

SEYMOUR, behold the pen once more in the hand of your friend; and wielded in your service, to whom every thing is due, that reason or gratitude can inspire. What shall I say to you, dearest, best of men, for the pains you have taken to make me worthy of esteem, since the first moment of our acquaintance? never till now was your victory complete. But I think you will do me the justice to believe me, when I say, that my present sentiments agree entirely with your last letter; that before it arrived they had undergone a thorough change. It has convinced me on a subject which perhaps I had not sufficiently considered; it has confirmed me in rectitude; and I hope I shall no more deviate from those principles you so nobly enforce. I tremble at

the idea of having been thought by you so guilty as I really was; I find now, that to look with indifference upon *errors*, is one step towards the commission of *crimes*; and when so far advanced, the descent is easy, gradual, and certain. How difficult is it to rise to the summit of virtue? but even this I *will* attempt; and assisted by your friendly arm, I fear not to attain a height so desirable, if any human mind may so presume.

As my first atonement, I write to Rosalia, to offer her an unworthy hand, but which she alone has any right to, if she thinks it acceptable. I dare not say I give with it a *heart*, because, in truth, I cannot add that is *mine* to give; but time and absence from the scenes which lately made me happy, will, I hope, teach me to think on *this*, as on every other subject, as becomes a man who professes himself your friend. Chance, and my delirium, discovered to my father and mother this fatal secret; it is their earnest wish that I should fulfil my engagements as soon as my health is restored. How good are they to me! and what have they not suffered for an undeserving son! I am a beggar in gratitude

to

to every creature round me; and the rest of my life, however long, will scarce suffice me to discharge the debt.

Neither my head nor my hand is equal to a long letter. Farewel, my dear friend; nobody can rejoice so much at your approaching happiness, as your faithful

H. Drummond.

LET

LETTER XLVI.

*Henry Drummond, Esq. to Mademoiselle
Sanzey.*

Westbury-Lodge, July 3.

ROSALIA, what will you say to your truant lover, who, forgetful of the vows he swore at your feet, had suffered himself to be captivated by an English beauty? Trembling and fearful he dares to be sincere; to confess his crime, to deprecate your anger, and even to sue for your forgiveness. He offers you a hand truly unworthy your acceptance; but led by the virtues in your train, he trusts it will not always remain so. He can offer you also a pleasing reception in this country, from those, who, assured of your merit, are desirous to call you by the endearing name of daughter; and who will endeavour to assist their son in making amends for his past neglect.

You,

You, my dear Mademoiselle de Sanzey, are the arbitress of my fate; say but you wish to see me, and I fly over sea and land to obey the summons. All my future life shall be spent to make you happy; and to atone for the treason I have been guilty of against love. Had I been in health I should long ere now have been in person at Paris; but a severe illness, from which I have scarce yet recovered, obliges me to write what I so much wish to say. As soon as I shall receive your answer, I hope to be able to obey your commands. Monsieur and Madame de Sanzey who were not ignorant of our engagement, will have no objection, I think, to ratify it on the terms I first proposed; to them I present my most respectful devoirs; to you, Rosalia, every thing you can desire from an affectionate friend.

H. Drummond.

L E T.

LETTER XLVII.

Miss Darnley to Lady Julia Harcourt.

Wansford-House, July 4.

I HAVE this moment received your favour, my Julia; it has revived my almost drooping spirits, by the kind assurance, that I shall have your supporting presence. I sincerely regret poor Selina's illness on *her* account, and I am afraid, not much less on my *own*. It would have given me great pleasure to have seen the dear girl at Wansford; but tho' I am denied that satisfaction at present, I will hope, in future to be more fortunate. You desire me to tell you *when* you must come, *the moment* you receive this letter, as Thursday is the day fixed. I have thought so often and so deeply upon this subject, that I feel myself a coward; and never in my life had more occasion for your support than at present.

present. I see my gravity gives pain to the only man in the world I ever wished to please; and yet notwithstanding all my endeavours, I cannot conceal it. I ardently wish you were here, as your vivacity would at least make my feelings not so conspicuous. I will not indulge myself in writing any longer, as I find the subject would be inexhaustible.

My best thanks to Lord and Lady St. Clair, for sparing you to me; but, my Julia, talk not of *one* week; remember how very long it is since you have favoured me with a visit, and at *what* a time you will be with me. My best wishes and love to my dear Selina; I hope you will bring a better account of her health. Yours, my Julia, with sincere affection,

Eliza Darnley.

L E T.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

*Lady Julia Harcourt to Miss Courtney.**Wansford-House, July 7.*

I WELL knew before I came from home how tenderly I loved you, my Selina; but, believe me, till I was parted from you, I was not sufficiently acquainted how necessary you were to my happiness. Tho' enjoying the company of my dear Eliza, I am every moment in want of you; some new idea strikes me, which I wish to communicate to you; or if any thing gives me pleasure, it loses half its joy because you do not share it with me. Tho' it is but a few hours ago since I parted with you, I don't feel inclined to take any rest till I have given you some account of my journey; and as the scribbling *mania* seems to be upon me at present, I think it quite as well to indulge it.

We

We rolled briskly along all the morning with a bright sunshine and clear sky, which promised a much longer continuance than we experienced in the sequel; and was an excellent lesson, to shew us how transient are all sublunary blessings. About four in the afternoon we were overtaken by one of the most dreadful storms I ever heard. The thunder roared incessantly, and the lightning came in such quick succeeding flashes, that it was impossible to distinguish them. It did not suit the nerves either of poor Anne or myself; but as there was no shelter near, and the horses went very quietly, we were obliged to make a "*virtue of necessity*," and therefore sat patiently trembling in the corner of the carriage, waiting the uncertainty of our fate. We had not proceeded far in this way before we were stopped by a phaeton and four, which had taken possession of the middle of the road. Three or four servants were vainly endeavouring to appease the unruly horses, who were so much terrified at the lightning, that it was impossible to hold them; and instantly as we came up to them, overturned the vehicle, and threw their poor master at some distance.

distance. The gentleman did not appear to be much hurt; but the servant told William, he feared the carriage was so much broken, it would be impossible for his master to get into it again; and as the rain was beginning to be very heavy, and there was no house near, he must be very much wet before he got to Wansford, a village about ten miles off, where he was going. He said his master's name was Lord Malbourne. As soon as William informed me of all these circumstances, I sent to offer his Lordship an asylum in my chariot; which he very thankfully and politely accepted. He is a very elegant young man indeed, almost as handsome as Westbury, Selina, and seems about his age.

As the storm abated my spirits arose; and in a short time we entered into a little chat. He said he was going upon a visit, or he should rather say to officiate as bridegroom-man to Mr. Seymour. I told him that I supposed to-morrow we should both be guests under the same roof, as I was going to act in the same capacity to Miss Darnley. You may believe he took that opportunity of saying some polite things; how much he was rejoiced

rejoiced that he was not immediately to part with his newly acquired acquaintance, &c. &c.

He asked me if I knew Mr. Seymour? I said, I had not yet that pleasure, *tho'* Miss Darnley was my particular friend. He said he would venture to affirm I should receive great pleasure from his acquaintance, as he was a most amiable character; every body that knew him loved him; he was happy to have it in his power to say, that Mr. Seymour *was* one of his most intimate friends; he could not say *the most* intimate, as they were a Trio at College, and he believed they had an equal regard for each other. I said, that was, I believed, a very singular case; that it was much more common to see two bound in a league of friendship, than three. He answered, it had always been the case with them, that he had flattered himself with meeting his other friend, Mr. Drummond, to night; but from a few hasty lines he had received from him the day before, he found he should be disappointed. I asked him if he knew Lord Westbury, (as he seemed to be all in our own way) "a very little; when Westbury joined
us,

us, Drummond and he came to England, and I went into Germany, where I remained till within these few weeks."

When we arrived at Wansford House I was about to take leave of my companion, when we perceived Mr. Seymour at the side of the carriage. His surprise and astonishment was very great to see his friend seated so quietly by me. I availed myself of the joy they expressed at meeting after so many months separation, to slip from them, and run into the house; where I found Eliza anxiously waiting for me; our pleasure was not inferior to that of the gentlemen. She appeared in better spirits than I expected from her letter; but there was a sedateness in her manner, if I may so express myself, that was pleasing to me. I could not have patience with a woman that should act with the same unconcern, on the eve of a day that was to determine her future happiness or misery for life, as at any other time.

We were very soon joined by the two gentlemen, and explanations and introductions took place on all sides. Eliza lamented much that you could not be with us. I wish you had ever been here,
that

that you might form an idea of the elegant simplicity that reigns thro' the whole of this delightful mansion. We were in a small drawing-room that looks into the garden, which might truly be said to be "sweet as Eglantine after a shower." The sashes were thrown open, and the woodbine and jessamine that twined around the window, dispensed the most agreeable perfume through the whole room.

The usual compliments were scarce over, when Lord Malbourne recurred once more to the subject I wished so much he should be silent upon. "I was much shocked, Seymour," said he, "to receive a short letter from Drummond, a day or two ago, wherein he told me he had been dangerously wounded in a duel; that a *lady* was the cause of it; but he referred me to you for particulars. I am convinced his antagonist must either have been very headstrong, or behaved very ill, for I don't think Drummond would willingly have engaged in an affair of that kind." Seymour cast a glance towards Eliza, as if he had said, "shall I give your friend pain, if I enlarge upon this subject?" Eliza looked towards me,
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and I am afraid my countenance rather betrayed too much perturbation for them to think I was quite indifferent on the subject. I was apprehensive the silence would grow quite distressing, and began to think it incumbent upon me to step forward; and therefore mustering up all my resolution, I said, "you only do your friend justice, my Lord, in supposing his antagonist to have behaved ill; he certainly is the most impetuous of all human beings; and I believe Mr. Drummond could not have acted otherwise than he did, according to modern ideas of the laws of *honour*. He is nearly recovered," addressing myself to Seymour, "he left Lord Mordington's on Tuesday, and I believe in a short time intends going to France to fulfil his engagement there. To you, Selina, I must confess, and only to you I would do it, that my heart seemed to sink as I pronounced the last words; and it was with difficulty I could articulate them. "I am sorry for it," said Lord Malbourne, "I do not think an union with Rosalia can ever be productive of happiness to Drummond; I saw a good deal of her the last time I was in Paris; she is almost ignorant of the world,

world, by having been so long confined in a convent; besides, there is a levity in her manner, which to a person of our friend's known good sense, and keenness of observation, can never be agreeable in one he is to spend his life with." "I am not so well acquainted with Mademoiselle de Sanzey as you are," said Seymour, "and therefore cannot so easily judge of her merits; to me there is only one insuperable objection to an union, and that is the difference of their religious tenets; but that ought to have been considered before an engagement had been entered into; I believe he cannot now retreat with honour." Very fortunately the servant entered with tea, and put an end to a conversation, which you, my dear girl, who know my heart, will readily believe could not be agreeable to me. I suppose, before they come to-morrow, Seymour will have let his friend a little into the secret; and he will be more sparing of his observations on that subject.

The gentlemen took their leave at eight o'clock; Eliza and I spent a comfortable evening. She laid open her whole heart to me; indeed, I think she has every prospect

prospect of happiness with Mr. Seymour. He is one of the most agreeable men I ever saw; and appears to be particularly easy and elegant in conversation. I believe it is full time for me to consider that I have to rise early to dress for church. I wish to-morrow was over, I feel myself a coward even at the thoughts of Eliza's wedding. I don't know how I should ever get over my own.

When you write, you must tell me all Westbury says and does; I am deeply interested in all your scenes. I have written a few lines to my mother; if more particulars are wanted, you will be so good as to give them. Good night, my dear girl; believe me, no situation can alter the unchangeable affection that is felt for you, by your

Julia Harcourt.



END OF VOL. I.

